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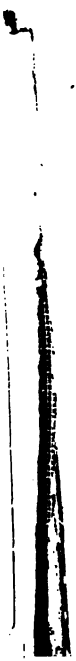
WHAT JESUS CHRIST THOUGHT OF HIMSELF

ANSON PHELPS STOKES



WHAT JESUS CHRIST THOUGHT OF HIMSELF

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WHAT JESUS CHRIST THOUGHT OF HIMSELF

An Outline Study and Interpretation of His Self-Revelation in the Gospels

BY

ANSON PHELPS STOKES

New York

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1916

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To

C. M. P. S.

PREFACE

THIS small book has grown out of studies made for my graduation thesis at the Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1900. Certain sections were used for a lecture on the Slocum Foundation in Ann Arbor in 1914, although no part of the work has heretofore been published. My main purpose has been to try to show in clear, compact form, and in untechnical language, what any scholarly student of the New Testament may find out for himself as to Jesus' view of his own person. A secondary purpose has been to interpret this self-revealed personality. The study — which is merely an outline treatment, with references to the Gospels, and comments — is designed to meet the most fundamental needs of thoughtful laymen in the field of Christology. It quotes only from the Bible, the primary basis of historical knowledge of the subject. The writer is aware that some

of the passages quoted may be questioned, and some of the interpretations disputed. This is inevitable in matters about which there is much difference of responsible opinion, but he believes that the views given will generally be found to be consistent with those of most recognized scholars who combine open-mindedness with reverence. The study is prepared from the point of view of a seeker after the truth, who is neither a theologian nor an authority on New Testament Criticism, but who has followed with interest and appreciation the work of both, believing the right understanding of Christ a matter of supreme importance.

I realize that if this little book receives any attention it will be attacked from two opposite sides. Liberal critics will complain because it makes some slight supplementary use of the Fourth Gospel. Some conservatives, on the other hand, will think the conclusions unorthodox, and not consistent with Nicene theology. But it is believed that all will recognize the author's sincere devotion to the Person of Christ, and his earnest attempt to show the latter's consciousness of Messiahship.

The general subject of this book has been little emphasized either in England or America. There are sections in the Biblical encyclopedias, and in works on the Divinity of Christ and on the Life of Christ, that deal with aspects of the subject; but the author has found few independent, systematic treatments of it as a whole. Baldensperger's "Selbstbewusstein Jesu" and Stalker's "Christology of Jesus" are, perhaps, the most important works that have appeared, and they are both more than fifteen years old. The former deals almost entirely with the Messiahship, and it is not available in an English translation. The latter book is mainly restricted, as its title and chapter headings show, to a consideration of the divine attributes of Jesus, as Son of Man, Son of God, Messiah, Redeemer, and Judge. It lays no emphasis on the witness of the Gospels to the Master's consciousness of his complete humanity —a factor that is vital to a right understanding of his person. Both are scholarly works which the author purposely refrained from reading until the present volume was well advanced in preparation. By this method the reader is assured an independent study of the Gospel material and, at the same

time, the addition of any facts or views which the reading of these books may have suggested as valuable. The hope is expressed that the resulting picture of the many-sided, self-revealed Christ here portrayed will give the lay public a clearer and more inclusive view of his thought about himself than these volumes of broader scholarship but of more restricted scope. The material is so arranged as to be specially available as a basis of study for Bible classes in colleges.

The author will be glad if this simple presentation of the subject proves an incentive to further study by ministers and laymen, and if in this age of theological questioning and reconstruction, it helps to clear the air of some misconceptions, especially by showing that the views of Jesus of Nazareth held by many liberally-minded but devout people to-day, although denounced by some conservative theologians, are in accordance with the teachings of the Master himself. To those who believe that the modern call "Back to Christ" is valid as the final criterion for the teachings of Christianity, there seems to be no reason why the same method of study should not produce equally sound results in the field of his

self-interpretation. We shall try, therefore, to find out "What Jesus Christ Thought of Himself" as a key to a right understanding of what we should think of him.

A. P. S.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
YALE UNIVERSITY,
January 1, 1916.

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WHAT JESUS CHRIST THOUGHT OF HIMSELF

WHAT JESUS CHRIST THOUGHT OF HIMSELF[1]

I. INTRODUCTION

THE title of this book is the expression in simple language of what psychologists would call "the self-consciousness of Christ." The phrase may be used as a brief designation of Jesus' conception of his own nature, of his view of his special relationship to God and to man. This sprang out of the very depths of his God-filled being. It was not reached intellectually through the reason, and yet there was doubtless a growth in his consciousness of his unique mission. We see it in its early stages when he was twelve years old, in the story of his visit to the Temple. His reply to his parents who sought him, "Wist ye not

[1] Except where specially qualified, the personal name Jesus and the more official title Christ are used almost interchangeably in this book for the historical person Jesus of Nazareth.

that I must be about my Father's business ?"[1] or as the Revised Version has it "in my Father's house," can be understood only when we realize that he had at least an extraordinary interest in fitting himself for his God-given task. His conviction that he was God's special messenger to humanity was still further strengthened by the profoundly significant spiritual experience at the baptism, when "the heavens opened"[2] — never to be closed for him. It is evidenced early in his ministry by his words in the first sermon at Nazareth.[3] There were later moments of exalted conviction of the world-significance of his person and work, such as the Transfiguration, and in general the events of the last few days of his earthly life, but there is not a single chapter of any gospel that does not breathe the wonderful atmosphere of a personality conscious of unique authority.

The fundamental question in Christian theology is not "What think ye of Christ?"[4] but "What did Christ think of himself?"

[1] Luke 2 : 49. In Revised Version "in my Father's house."
[2] Mark 1 : 10. [3] Luke 4 : 18–21. [4] Matt. 22 : 42.

The intelligent answer to the former depends largely on the latter. If we can but find out what the Saviour thought of his own person, his own relation to God and man, the whole field of religious thought will be clarified. It is with answers to these questions as given by Jesus himself that this book deals.

Fortunately the material available for study is large, consisting of his words and acts recorded in the gospels. In this connection it should be remembered that he laid great emphasis on the divine authority and permanent value of his sayings,[1] and these are often so strikingly original that they bear their own authentication.

Quotations have been made from the King James' or Authorized Version, as this is still in most common use in our churches. The stress is placed on the Synoptic tradition, which carries the weight of the evidence on which this volume is based. Passages from the Fourth Gospel that have not near parallels

[1] Cf. Matt. 7:24–27; Luke 10:42; 21:33; John 14:23, 24, etc.

in the earlier records are seldom quoted in the text, and never emphasized. The author is not unaware that the general conclusion of modern critical scholarship, which he accepts, gives the greatest historical value to the two earliest sources: the Gospel of Mark (omitting the appendix, xvi, 9–20) — the original narrative source; and the so-called "Logia," the words or teachings of Jesus in Matthew and Luke — the original teaching source. These — omitting a few passages — represent rock-bottom in so far as our most trustworthy knowledge of the Master is concerned, but the Fourth Gospel has corroborative, and, when not inconsistent with the earlier tradition, supplementary value, especially for the impression made by Jesus on a devout and philosophical disciple. Although the three other gospels, the Synoptics, were written from 65 to 90 A.D., and this new record did not appear until a generation later (about the year 100), yet its unconscious tributes to the Master's humanity in the midst of the divine exaltation of his person, are of significance, being an unmistakable sign of the

survival of the original impression. Statements in the text indicate its points of main divergence from the Synoptic teaching, as well as differences of emphasis, while footnote references to all the passages quoted will enable the reader who so desires to discount the value of Johannine material, even though this is used with much restraint. That it contains some matter of supplementary importance for an understanding of Christ's thought about himself none but the most extreme critic would deny.

In fact it is just here that the Fourth Gospel is of great significance, irrespective of its authorship. It is illustrative and interpretive, rather than strictly biographical or historical. The recollections of old age and the reflections of a contemplative spirit, which it represents, may be lacking in chronological accuracy and in exactness of memory as to words heard or heard of in earlier years, and yet give a valuable picture of another's character, thought, and most striking utterances. In this connection it is noticeable that the main conclusions of this volume would remain the same

even if the Johannine[1] sections were entirely omitted. Contrary to the general impression derived from the reading of some critical works, it will be seen from the following pages that the humanity of Jesus is well supported by his words and acts in the Fourth Gospel, and his so-called "divinity," if rightly interpreted, in the Synoptics. But, undoubtedly, the latter give the truest picture of the historical Jesus, and their accounts must be followed when there are differences in the impressions made by the two records. That the Johannine Christ, in keeping with its author's metaphysical interests, makes more exalted and more frequent claims to divine dignity, as distinct from power, than the Christ of the earlier gospels, cannot be questioned. This appears in the sections which discuss his consciousness of unique sonship, and of returning to influence the world. But even in each of these extreme cases Synoptic bases for the claims of the later narrative are pointed out,

[1] This word is used as a description of the Fourth Gospel without any attempt to identify the evangelist.

while on the other hand there is nowhere in the New Testament a clearer group of statements,[1] showing Jesus' conviction that he merely represented another — God, who was the source of all his power, than in the Fourth Gospel.

The most casual reading of the gospels discloses the fact that there were two channels or streams in which this consciousness of Jesus Christ flowed — the divine and the human — which, uniting in him, constituted the Incarnation. These form the main divisions of this work, but the Master's genuine humanity is so apparent and so generally recognized today, that it will be dealt with more briefly. It is essential, however, that the human life lived in Palestine nineteen hundred years ago, with its knowledge of limitations and of subordination to God, be clearly grasped, before the life, known to its possessor as divine in its essential being, is considered. And yet before studying these two sides separately it should be stated emphatically that the Biblical doctrine of creation implies a kinship

[1] See page 19.

between creator and created that rules out all inseparable walls between them. God created man in his "image" and after his "likeness," [1] so that in man as man there is the latent divine spark. The words "human" and "divine" stand for important and convenient distinctions, but not necessarily for any antagonism. In Jesus the two elements were perfectly united, forming a single unified personality.

[1] Gen. 1 : 26.

II. THE HUMAN SIDE OF JESUS CHRIST

THAT Jesus lived a thoroughly human life is indisputable. Docetism — the old theory that his body was entirely a phantom, without physical reality — is an obsolete explanation of his person. His bodily organism did not differ from that of normal men. He learned his lessons as other Hebrew boys learned theirs. His power was not full grown at the start. The child Jesus grew.[1] He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."[2] He was subject to man's feelings. We are told that he was wearied with his journey,[3] that he was thirsty,[4] that he ate and drank,[5] that he slept,[6] that he was sad at heart and troubled in spirit,[7]

[1] Luke 2:40. [2] Luke 2:52. [3] John 4:6.
[4] John 4:7; 19:28. [5] Matt. 11:19.
[6] Matt. 8:24; cf. 8:20.
[7] Mark 14:34; 8:12; Matt. 26:38.

that he wept,[1] that he craved companionship,[2] that temptation was a reality to him,[3] that he was astonished and surprised at things which happened,[4] that he showed curiosity,[5] that he shrank from pain,[6] that he was quick to notice courtesy,[7] that he felt the need of supporting his position by reference to scripture,[8] that he was specially fond of his friends,[9] and of his country,[10] that he was indignant against those whom he believed to be false leaders of the people,[11] and that he even showed signs of impatience on certain occasions.[12] He prayed to God constantly and with great intensity,[13] he spoke the language of the place and time,[14] he worked at the carpenter's bench,[15] he was a man indeed in all points tempted like as we

[1] Luke 19:41; John 11:35.
[2] Matt. 26:38; cf. John 11:3–5; 12:2.
[3] Matt. 4:1–11; cf. Luke 22:28.
[4] Mark 6:6; Luke 7:9.
[5] Luke 2:46.
[6] Luke 22:42.
[7] Mark 14:6–9; cf. Luke 7:44–46.
[8] Matt. 4:4; 7:10.
[9] John 11:5.
[10] Matt. 23:37–39.
[11] Luke 11:46 and *passim*.
[12] Mark 7:6; Luke 2:49; John 2:4.
[13] Matt. 8:10; Mark 6:6 and *passim*.
[14] Matt. 27:46.
[15] Mark 6:3.

are and feeling that it was best that he should undergo the rite of baptism "of repentance for the remission of sins,"[1] yet without sin himself,[2] for he moved among men as one who always made practice square with precept.

That he was conscious of this complete humanity, which the people never questioned,[3] is shown by his words and acts. It is evident, in particular, from his

1. Consciousness of Limitations,
2. Consciousness of Deriving All from God,
3. Consciousness of Subordination in Prayer.

1. *Consciousness of Limitations.* There is an incident recorded both by Matthew[4] and Mark[5] in which this realization of limitations is evident. The sons of Zebedee request of the Master that they may sit the one on his right hand, the other on his left, in his glory. He replies that the granting of such a request is not "mine to give," but that this privilege is restricted to those "for whom it is prepared of my Father" — an answer

[1] Mark 4:4–9. [2] Heb. 4:15; cf. Matt. 4:1–11.
[3] Matt. 21:11. [4] Matt. 20:23. [5] Mark 10:40.

which may be compared with his statement, as recorded in the Fourth Gospel, that "no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." [1] The reconciliation of these passages with others in which Christ is represented as the absolute judge is not now our task; suffice it here to point out the expression on his part of the conviction that there were powers belonging to God the Father which did not belong to him.

Another example of this is his statement that he was unaware of the time of his second coming. "Of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." [2] One who knew himself to be God, without assumed or imposed human limitations, could not so restrict the field of his knowledge. On the other hand he who spoke those words was aware that the God in Heaven was all-powerful and perfect — the possessor of powers which did not belong to his earthly revealer. That the historical person Jesus

[1] John 6:65. [2] Matt. 24:36; Mark 13:32.

Christ claimed omnipotence or omniscience is nowhere stated. On the contrary we are told that owing to the lack of faith on the part of the people of Nazareth "he could there do no mighty work." [1] Similarly he claimed no power of knowing purely physical conditions or events at a distance. He went up close to the fig tree to find out whether or not it bore fruit.[2] That knowledge possessed by God and figuratively expressed in the saying that the very hairs of our head are numbered, was not his. In fact it is not improbable that Jesus was in error regarding certain matters of knowledge, such as his belief that Jonah was actually in the belly of the whale alive for three days,[3] that David wrote the 110th Psalm,[4] that men were possessed by demons,[5] that the forces of evil were led by an actual personality — the Devil, or Satan,[6] and that the visible second coming of Christ and the final world-judgment were near at hand.[7] In such matters,

[1] Mark 6 : 5–6.
[2] Matt. 21 : 19; Mark 11 : 13.
[3] Matt. 12 : 40.
[4] Matt. 22 : 43, 44.
[5] Luke 4 : 33.
[6] Matt. 4 : 10; 13 : 19, etc.
[7] Mark 13 : 24–30; Matt. 16 : 28, etc.

outside of the sphere of the soul's positive religious life and experience, his information was based on that of his place and time. His wisdom, which was God-given and God-nurtured, was unmatched, but his actual knowledge of the facts of history and science was limited.

Similarly the help upon which he relied at great crises was not self-evolved. It was the spiritual help which God alone could supply. As he said to the traitor Judas, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?"[1] In the Garden of Gethsemane he exclaimed in agony, "Father, all things *are* possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt."[2] This prayer implies his feeling of limitations. There were powers which God the Father enjoyed which were not in the Son's possession, and he asks that they may be used in his behalf. The words also infer that there was a human side of Christ, whose will

[1] Matt. 26:53. [2] Mark 14:36.

might differ from the will of God, although he prays that this may not happen.[1] So conscious was he of this that it is recorded in all the Synoptics that he refused to be called "good," saying that "*there is* none good but one, *that is*, God,"[2] a statement which may, however, mean no more than that God is the source, the original cause, of all holiness and power. Again, in the supreme moment on the Cross, when suffering both physical and spiritual were at their height, and when for the moment all seemed black and hopeless, we hear the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"[3] No amount of exegetical jugglery can induce the open minded student to believe that these words were uttered by one unconscious of his own limitations in comparison with the Deity. Had Jesus been God, without the restrictions of humanity, it is inconceivable that he should have so spoken. He also frequently asked questions to secure

[1] John 12:27.

[2] Mark 10:17, 18; Luke 18:19; Matt. 19:17; cf. Matt. 12:32.

[3] Mark 15:34.

information — which omniscience would not have found necessary.[1]

Let us take, finally, a passage from the Fourth Gospel. This gospel is generally regarded as representing in the most extreme form the claims of Jesus to divine dignity — colored by its author's own spiritual reflections on the Lord's person — but even here he is reported as saying "My Father is greater than I."[2] One to be greater must be the possessor of powers of a higher kind or in a less restricted form than the one with whom he is compared. So the Jesus of John must be considered as having been conscious of limitations. It is maintained, then, as shown by a study of his own words, that he knew himself to be hemmed in by some restrictions. He did not think of his own capacities as unlimited. Some of the old school theologians recognized this frankly, but tried to explain it by the doctrine of the *Kenosis* — the deliberate giving up by Jesus of certain divine powers.

[1] Cf. Mark 5:30; 6:38; 9:21; John 11:34.
[2] John 14:28.

2. *Consciousness of Deriving All from God.* We pass from different definite statements of limited power, which emphasize Jesus' consciousness of his own humanity, to his oft-repeated statement that he and his message were not of himself, but of God. Both were thought of by him as derivative.

The gospels make it clear that Jesus did not come into the world of his own initiative. He was sent by another, and knew it.[1] That he shared that other's spirit we do not deny, yet the one who sends is the source, the origin, the first cause, and, consequently, to some extent the greater. The essence of the gospel — whether the words quoted are authentic or not — is given in the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of John, and the essence of that verse is that God "gave" his Son. The coming of Jesus was not due to his own independent volition. It was, as the Bible tells us, the eternal purpose of God to reveal himself — "When the fulness of the time was come God sent forth his Son."[2] But we are studying Christ's consciousness,

[1] Luke 4: 18; 21, 43; cf. John 3: 16. [2] Gal. 4: 4.

not that of evangelists or disciples. And here the evidence is convincing that he felt that a higher power was responsible for his mission and work. Both Synoptists and the Fourth Gospel bring this out clearly. In Matthew we find Jesus attributing his power to "the Spirit of God";[1] in Mark we hear him acknowledging that there are things which he cannot do[2] but saying that "with God all things are possible;"[3] in Luke he clearly states his view that he was merely the representative of "him that sent me,"[4] and adds "all things are delivered to me of my Father."[5]

Even as shown through the medium of the Fourth Gospel, with its tendency to exalt the divine dignity of the Saviour, it is manifest that he felt his appearance in this world and his message were due to the impulse of a higher power. Let us quote the words of Christ as recorded in John, remembering that passages involving the Synoptic idea of the complete subordination of Jesus to God are

[1] Matt. 12:28. [2] Mark 10:40.
[3] Mark 10:27; cf. Matt. 19:26.
[4] Luke 9:48. [5] Luke 10:22; cf. Matt. 11:27.

of special significance as evidence of his humanity, when found in the Gospel whose author was committed to the Logos doctrine of the Lord's origin. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him . . .;" [1] "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me;" [2] "I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me." [3] "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day . . ." [4]

The irresistible impression conveyed by the reading of these utterances thrown together as above, is that they are, or are based on, the words of one who recognizes that his life and influence are not self-supplied — his power, his inspiration, his very being are derivative. They are dependent both in origin and sustenance upon another. The love of the one may be as great as that of the other, but the dependent cannot be all

[1] John 6:44; cf. John 12:44. [2] John 7:16.
[3] John 7:28–29; cf. John 5:30, 36; 6:38, 39.
[4] John 9:4; cf. also John 7:33; 8:42; 11:42; 17:10, etc.

powerful in all spheres. Not only do these quotations show that Jesus knew himself to be sent of God, the representative of another, God's ambassador to a fallen world, but they show that for his beliefs and actions he was entirely indebted to his heavenly Father. In a word, the message and the messenger were from above. Christ's message was not his — that is, it was not the result of his own unaided thought, — it was due to the "Open Heavens" working upon his equally open spirit. He did not preach a self-given message. What God brings with conviction to his heart, this he proclaims to others: "Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." [1] Any man who lives up to his best by doing the will of God, may readily find out, so Jesus tells us, whether the doctrine which he preaches comes from God or from himself.[2] So the gospel — the good news — was not, according to his own belief, self-evolved, but God-given. All that he possessed in the way of truth — his message —, as well as

[1] John 12: 50; cf. 17: 14. [2] John 7: 17; cf. 17: 17.

all that he himself — the messenger — was, were the gift of the heavenly Father, working through his receptive and coöperating spirit. No wonder that he gave as the first commandment that "the Lord our God is one Lord," and that he should be loved "with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." [1] This shows the true emphasis. Jesus did not care that men should praise him for his helpful preaching: he preferred that "they should hear the word of God, and keep it." [2]

The God whom he called his "Father in heaven" [3] was the beginning and end of his power and his teaching. It was his "kingdom" that he came to proclaim. His very use of "Father," as his favorite designation of God, is an evidence of his sense of dependence upon a higher power. Probably the first [4] and last [5] of the originally recorded utterances of Jesus include the word. It is found in all the gospels, being used over

[1] Mark 12: 28–30.
[2] Luke 11: 27, 28.
[3] Matt. 6: 9; Luke 11: 2.
[4] Luke 2: 49.
[5] Luke 23: 46.

150 times, and is the common word used by Jesus in addressing the Deity in prayer, or in referring to the personal relation between him and his children. This is the more impressive as such use was very uncommon in previous religious history. Jesus was brought up with the strict view that the father was the head of the Jewish household, with the children always subject to him, so when he transferred his parental designation to God he carried over with it the sense of due subordination, as well as that of tender love.

3. *Consciousness of Subordination in Prayer.* The third and most striking evidence of difference between the human Jesus and God the Father, is the complete subordination of the former to the latter in prayer.

It is not merely to a "better self" within that he directs his appeals, but to the eternal God.[1] It is noticeable that in every crisis he resorts to prayer. In communion with God alone does complete peace and assurance come to his soul. We are told that he was

[1] Matt. 26: 42–53; Luke 11: 2.

"praying" at the time of his baptism,[1] and again at his transfiguration.[2] Before the choice of the Twelve, the first step in the founding of the Christian Church, we find him passing the long night in prayer to God.[3] Similarly, before his first serious contest with the Jewish hierarchy, "he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed."[4] When he is tempted to accept the kingly crown as a short-cut to Messianic power, he retires to the mountain,[5] doubtless to pour out his thoughts to a listening and answering God. It is specially worthy of note that it was while watching him earnestly engaged in prayer that "when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray."[6] In the Garden of Gethsemane his prayer is so intense, his effort to put his own soul in unison with the will of the Eternal is so strenuous, that the sweat on his brow appears as "drops of blood" — an expression of great feeling and earnestness, even if the words are not taken literally. We hear

[1] Luke 3 : 21. [2] Luke 9 : 29. [3] Luke 6 : 12, 13.
[4] Luke 5 : 16. [5] John 6 : 15. [6] Luke 11 : 1.

his agonized cry, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."[1] We hear him at the tomb of the restored Lazarus giving all the glory to God, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me."[2] We see him on the cross, when in the moment of agony the whole meaning and power of his life are summed up in those short words "Eli, Eli,"[3] my God, my God! We hear of his feeding the five thousand on five loaves and two fishes, but the ability to perform this miracle was not his own. Notice the beautiful touch in the gospel story, "He looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves."[4] And again, after the cure of the man with the dumb spirit, he said, "This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer [and fasting]."[5] His prayers include appeals for help for himself,[6] for his disciples,[7] for his enemies,[8] for a friend,[9] for the whole church.[10]

[1] Matt. 26:42; cf. Mark 14:35, 36.
[2] John 11:41. [3] Matt. 27:46. [4] Mark 6:41.
[5] Mark 9:29. Words in brackets omitted in Revised Version.
[6] Matt. 26:39; Mark 14:35; etc. [7] John 17:6–19.
[8] Luke 23:34. [9] Luke 22:32. [10] John 17:20–26.

Prayer was, humanly speaking, the main secret of the Master's uniqueness. He was entirely dependent for his spiritual food upon his heavenly Father. Take communion with God out of his life, and there might be left us an ethical ideal, but surely there would be no religion, no redeeming power.

Jesus Christ lived a human life, deriving his being and drawing his inspiration from a divine source. As distinguished from God, he may be spoken of in his earthly life of struggle [1] as possessing only derivative powers. To be a man among men he must needs be subject to the limitations of humanity. That the contemporaries of Jesus fully appreciated this is evident. "Never man spake like this man." [2] "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God." [3] The disciples had walked and talked and supped with him, and they knew that their Master had flesh and blood, and that he was not a deity of ghost-like apparitions. But our task is not to determine

[1] Cf. Luke 12 : 50.
[2] John 7 : 46; cf. Matt. 13 : 54. [3] John 6 : 46.

what others thought of him, but to fathom his own self-consciousness. Having shown, therefore, that he knew that he was subject to some of the limitations of our humanity, that he was in truth, as he called himself, "the Son of man"—a term suggestive in this connection, in spite of its Messianic significance — it remains to develop at greater length the sense of his relationship to God; and finally to attempt to harmonize the manward and Godward sides of his consciousness.

III. THE DIVINE SIDE OF JESUS CHRIST

PERHAPS the most striking feature of the gospels to an intelligent non-Christian reading them for the first time is the evident conviction of the central figure as to the unique relationship which he bears to God. To understand the boldness of his claims we must study his words and acts as they show him to have known himself:

1. Master of the Past,
2. Master of the Present, and
3. Master of the Future.

1. *Master of the Past.* The thought of the Jews from the time of the exile to the beginning of our era was taken up with the development of two ideals — the Law or Torah and the Messiah. The one constituted the greatness of the past and furnished the background for the other, which was the hope of

the future. They were conceptions of the greatest sanctity. The one had its foundation in the reality of history; the other its ideal in the imagination of seers. Together they made up the main elements of the Jews' belief concerning God's revelation to men.

Into such conditions of thought comes the Master, and claims to "fulfill" the one and to "fill-full" the other. He dares to connect his own person inseparably with both of these exalted conceptions — an act which for sheer boldness is without a parallel in the annals of the world's great religious leaders. It shows the consciousness of a peculiar relationship to Deity and to history.

A. Consciousness of Fulfilling the Old Testament. That Jesus considered the revelation given in the Old Testament to have been completed and fulfilled in him is not open to doubt. It was of the Messiah that Prophets had prophesied and Psalmists sung. He gathered up in himself all the holiness and spiritual truth and power that the sages and leaders of the past had possessed, and he

knew it. He was conscious that in his person and teachings lay the meeting-point between the old covenant and the new. When he appeared after the resurrection we are told that "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." [1] We find him saying "That all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me." [2] He seems to have maintained that the great lawgiver himself had him — as Messiah — in mind in his legislation. "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me." [3] Not only Moses, but Isaiah,[4] Malachi,[5] Zechariah,[6] and the Psalms,[7] were among the writers of the Old Testament whose words the Master thought sealed in his own person. The phrase, "the scriptures must be fulfilled," [8] is one often recurring in the gospels, not only

[1] Luke 24:27. [2] Luke 24:44; cf. John 5:39.
[3] John 5:46. [4] Luke 4:18, 21.
[5] Matt. 11:10; Luke 7:27.
[6] Matt. 26:31; John 12:14, 15. [7] Mark 14:49.
[8] Mark 14:49; cf. Matt. 5:17; 26:54.

in reference to general conditions, but to such specific events as his appearance as the Messiah [1] and his being "reckoned among the transgressors." [2] The boldness, the self-confidence implied by its application by Jesus to himself, can be grasped only when we realize that the books now composing the Canon of the Old Testament were looked upon by many in strict religious circles as let down from Heaven without spot or flaw. Jesus quoted from fourteen of them, showing a special fondness for the Psalms, Isaiah, Hosea, and Deuteronomy — the most spiritual of the legal books.

B. Consciousness of Superseding the Law. Not only did Jesus claim to fulfill the spiritual prophecies of the Old Testament, and believe that the Law found its completion in him, but his divine authority was so supreme that he dared to set up his own teaching on certain points in a supplementary or antithetical relationship to it. If we can understand the exalted conception of the old Canon of Scrip-

[1] Luke 4 : 18–21; cf. Isaiah 61 : 1, 2.
[2] Luke 22 : 37; cf. Isaiah 53 : 12.

ture held by the Jews and appreciate the authoritative character of the interpretation it had received at the hands of the Scribes, and if then we read over the fifth chapter of Matthew's Gospel with its oft-repeated refrain, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time. . . . But I say unto you," [1] we may perhaps get some idea of how completely Jesus was conscious of supplementing and in a measure superseding the teaching of Judaism. He was specially outspoken in denouncing the teachings of the Scribes as totally inadequate. The repeated use of "I" — the so-called Monarchical Ego — in contrast with sacred authorities, implies that henceforth, without doing away with the great moral foundations of The Law, a living person becomes a divine substitute for a dead letter and an elaborate ritual.

It is a matter of great importance in the development of our theme that we should have as clear an idea as possible of Jesus' attitude towards Judaism and its institutions — for here was a system believed to be

[1] Matt. 5 : 21, 22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44.

of peculiar sanctity, and the departures which he made from it can be explained only on the basis of his consciousness of divine mission. He was a regular attendant at the Synagogue, worshiped at the Temple, felt keenly the need of retaining its purity as the house of God, recognized the authority of the Mosaic Law,[1] and urged that it be observed. In these and other ways, especially by his emphasis on the Old Testament scriptures, he showed that he was a loyal Jew.[2] But he was opposed to the casuistry [3] of the Scribes, — the official interpreters of the Law, — denounced their extreme ceremonialism, and showed both by words and acts that he was in favor of the religion of the spirit rather than that of the letter. In certain respects he took an attitude at direct variance with the constituted authorities of the church. He ate with publicans and sinners,[4] for he came "to seek and to save that which was lost." [5]

[1] Matt. 23 : 1–3. [2] John 10 : 35. [3] Mark 2 : 15.
[4] Matt. 9 : 10, 11; Mark 2 : 15; Luke 5 : 29.
[5] Luke 19 : 10; cf. Parables of Lost Sheep, Luke 15 : 3–7; Lost Drachma, Luke 15 : 8–10; Lost or Prodigal Son, Luke 15 : 11–32.

He did not observe the Jewish minutiæ regarding fasting, his breaches in this respect being so great that the people exclaimed that "the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast," [1] but that Jesus "came eating and drinking" [2] and his "disciples fast not." [3] He opposed all form of extreme external ceremonialism and ostentation,[4] especially in such matters as ablutions,[5] where thirty chapters of the Mishna were given to rules on the single subject of the purification of vessels. He tried to show the people that it was their words and deeds which evidenced whether they were religious, not the detailed observance[6] of the regulations regarding eating and drinking. To him the distinction between the ceremonially clean and unclean no longer existed. In a word, although accepting the great principles of the Law as divine, he opposed interpretations placed on it by the Scribes and Pharisees, and insisted that men go beneath the letter to the spirit,

[1] Mark 2 : 18. [2] Matt. 11 : 19. [3] Mark 2 : 18.
[4] Matt. 6 : 16–18. [5] Mark 7 : 1–23.
[6] Luke 11 : 38; Mark 7 : 1–13.

for, as his great apostle said, "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." [1] He saw that religion must emerge from legalism and ceremonialism into a deeply spiritual and ethical atmosphere.

Jesus had nothing to say about the important Jewish rite of circumcision, but Paul's interpretation of the Christian attitude towards it was in entire accord with the general tenor of Christ's teaching. It was in this same spirit that the Master interpreted liberally the Jewish laws regarding divorce [2] and the Sabbath.[3] It was natural that the great prophets of Israel should appeal to him so powerfully. His references were to the "Law and the Prophets," [4] rather than to the Law alone. It is true that he laid emphasis on the observance of the Law and stated that none of it should be destroyed "till all be fulfilled," [5] but he seems to have felt increasingly that he was its fulfillment, and that, consequently, he

[1] II Cor. 3 : 6. [2] Matt. 19 : 3–8; Mark 10 : 2–9.
[3] Mark 2 : 27–28; Luke 6 : 1–11.
[4] Matt. 5 : 17–20; cf. Luke 16 : 17. [5] Matt. 5 : 18.

in large measure supplanted it. This was not so much because he formally abrogated it, as because he transcended it. The temporary, restricted, and imperfect in it fell by its own weight when confronted with the eternal, universal, and perfect principle of conduct and faith manifested by Christ. This was the "new wine" which had to be put into "new bottles," [1] and which no longer made necessary that accommodation [2] to the old legalism which was required in the earlier period of the training of the Jewish nation.

This general attitude towards the old dispensation is brought out by his references to the Temple. He was loyal to it as the historical center of worship for his people, but he felt released from absolute obligation to observe certain of its rites, even though he might deem it a matter of wisdom not to disregard them entirely.[3] He believed that the Temple would be destroyed,[4] and

[1] Matt. 9: 16–17; Mark 2: 21; Luke 5: 36–37.
[2] Mark 10: 2–9.
[3] Matt. 17: 24–27.
[4] Matt. 24: 2; cf. Mark 15: 29; Acts 6: 14.

that in the new and more spiritual religion which he was ushering in, men could worship God anywhere.[1] It was "mercy" rather than the old temple sacrifice for which he most cared.[2] He went so far as to say "in this place is *one* greater than the temple" [3] — a characterization which is apparently self-applied.

All of these facts bear striking witness to the self-consciousness of Christ. Think of the exalted position of the old Law — the Torah, and of the authority of the Scribes as its official interpreters; and then turn to the young prophet of Nazareth, and see him abrogating some parts, supplementing others, and daring to interpret old truth and proclaim new truth with supreme confidence and authority! In so far, then, as his attitude toward the Old Testament is concerned, he believes himself to be the fulfillment of its highest aspiration and prophecy, and consequently the individual whose word constitutes the new criterion of ethical and spiritual authority.

[1] John 4:20–24. [2] Matt. 12:7. [3] Matt. 12:6.

C. Consciousness of Being the Messiah. But Jesus' conception of his relationship to Old Testament thought reaches its climax in his claim to be the Christ or Messiah. For centuries the Jewish people had been looking forward to the coming in Palestine of a Son of David who would usher in the glorious Messianic kingdom. This dream had started in times of national distress, and had become vivid during the hard period of the exile. It was based on the thought that the God who was believed to have made a special covenant with the Israelites would not allow his chosen people to live permanently under a foreign yoke, or in obscurity, but would ultimately restore them to sovereignty and power. They looked back to the wonderful reign of David, and looked forward to its renewal by his successors under even more glorious conditions.[1] What was thus originally a general and rather indefinite hope, becomes more and more definite and concrete, until in Isaiah [2] a single righteous and power-

[1] Cf. II Samuel 7: 8–17; Psalms 89: 19–37.
[2] Isaiah 7: 14–16; 9: 6, 7, etc.; cf. Micah 4: 5.

ful king appears in prophecy as the deliverer, bringing peace, and compelling obedience to the Holy God of Israel. In the two centuries before Christ, during the difficult period through which the Jews were passing politically, the Messianic hope was revived in many apocalyptic writings, such as the Songs of Solomon and the Book of Enoch, in which the thought of the coming deliverer was made more definite, and somewhat idealized. Yet among the masses of the Jewish people in Palestine at the beginning of our era, in spite of some divergences of view, the Messianic kingdom was commonly thought of as a great empire, and the occupant of its throne as a Jewish king of imperial presence and power — a worthy successor of David and Solomon. Such was the popular notion, and the prophets of the past had passages which helped to support this conception of royal splendor associated with the Messianic office.

But he who now claimed to be the Messiah, although reputed to be of the seed of David, was born in a village manger,[1] worked at a

[1] Luke 2 : 7.

carpenter's bench,[1] had not the learning of the schools,[2] lived in simplicity if not poverty,[3] associated with the despised and the outcast,[4] and was finally crucified between two malefactors.[5] And yet this humble preacher for whom the ruling classes had only contempt, had the boldness to claim to be the rightful successor to the throne of David, and consequently God's special representative on earth. He was conscious — at least after the baptism — that he was the Messiah, summing up in himself many types and ideals of Jewish history which centered about this great prophetic and apocalyptic conception. His acceptance of the title was, humanly speaking, a difficult but necessary step to take. It was not an adequate ideal for the spiritual and universal aspects of his mission, and so it is perhaps not strange that the Christian church has given it such scanty consideration. And yet without it, without working through, although also ultimately beyond, this nation-

[1] Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3.
[2] John 7:15.
[3] Matt. 8:20; cf. John 7:53 with 8:1.
[4] Matt. 9:10; 11:19; 21:32.
[5] Matt. 27:38.

alistic conception, he could not have accomplished his world-wide task. He had to take the inherited thought of the Messiahship as he found it, then broaden it, and give it a more profound significance.

There are six important instances recorded in the gospels of Jesus' accepting Messianic tributes or performing Messianic acts. They have to do with the Confession at Cæsarea Philippi, the Anointing, the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, the Cleansing of the Temple, and the trials before the High Priest and Pilate. These events all came relatively late in his life, mostly in the last week. He did not dare announce himself as the Messiah at the beginning of his ministry, fearing that the people, with their materialistic and nationalistic views of the office, might not grasp its spiritual significance.

The first incident is connected with Peter's famous confession of Jesus' Messiahship.[1] It is important not only for his praise of the disciple for recognizing him as "the Christ, the Son of the Living God," but because he

[1] Matt. 16: 13–20; Mark 8: 27–30; Luke 9: 18–21.

made the discerning Peter, or, perhaps, his confession, the "rock" on which he built his church. The mere asking by Jesus of the question "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" is significant. It carries its own answer, as far as his own consciousness is concerned, but when Peter frankly acknowledges him as the Christ, the recognition is so exact, and so remarkable, considering the unexpectedly humble character of the Messiah's life, that Jesus traces the knowledge to the inspiration of God. The revelation vouchsafed to Peter corresponded to the Master's own conviction.

The anointing by Mary of Bethany was also significant. The precious ointment was poured on his head — a symbolic act based on Old Testament precedents for kings and prophets. Jesus did not object; on the contrary he approved, and, in spite of the opposition of the people who thought the act represented a large waste of money, replied "ye have the poor with you always . . . but me ye have not always;" [1] and added that

[1] Mark 14:3–9; Matt. 26:6–13.

the anointing would be proclaimed wherever the Gospel was known. This event must clearly be interpreted as a recognition by Jesus of his Messiahship, especially when taken in connection with his statement at the beginning of his ministry in Nazareth. Then he accepted Isaiah's prophecy as "fulfilled" in himself: "The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."[1]

The eleventh chapter of Mark gives us the best picture of the third incident. Christ is approaching the sacred city shortly before the Passover. Here is the passage describing what Christendom, with remarkable insight, has always called the "Triumphal Entry." "And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him. And many spread their garments in

[1] Luke 4: 17–21; cf. Isaiah 61: 1.

the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed *them* in the way. And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Blessed *be* the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest."[1] Such were the honors paid, and Jesus offered no rebuke. He accepted them all, as they were probably meant, as a tribute to his rights of kingship. In fact he was so sensible that the plaudits and marks of respect of the crowd were proper that when asked to rebuke his disciples he exclaimed: "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."[2] The phrase "in the name of the Lord," twice repeated in the account, is worthy of note. It means that the kingdom of God is to be a vicegerency in which the Messiah represents Jehovah. This shows its importance, and, at the same time, emphasizes the significance of the step taken

[1] Mark 11: 7–11; cf. John 12: 13–15.
[2] Luke 19: 40.

by Jesus in accepting this tribute of the multitude.

The triumphal entry was closely followed by Christ's visit to the Temple, where, as the representative of Israel, he cleansed it of its abuses.[1] "Make not my Father's house an house of merchandise"[2] was the burden of his thought. If we but realize how strictly the guardianship of the Temple was kept in the hands of the priestly caste, and how, as in the case of all sacerdotal classes, any outside lay interference would be immediately resented and punished, we may perhaps get some idea of the feelings of Jesus when he performed this act. It cannot easily be explained or understood on any hypothesis other than this — that he who cleansed the Temple of Israel believed himself to be its rightful guardian, the Anointed of God, the Messiah.

The trial before the high priest gives the fourth illustration. Here the words of Jesus leave no doubt as to his claims. The oldest

[1] Matt. 21 : 12; Mark 11 : 15, 16, and Luke 19 : 45.
[2] John 2 : 16.

of the records could not be more specific. "Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." [1] The definite acceptance by Jesus of the title "the Christ" and its equivalent "the Son of the Blessed," as well as his use of the well-known Messianic imagery of the time, are impressive. That those present took his words as a claim of Messiahship is made doubly clear by the statement of the high priest immediately following, showing that he thought Jesus guilty of "blasphemy."

The sixth event was the trial before Pilate. The "Thou sayest" given by all four evangelists as his reply to the governor's question concerning his kingship, is now generally admitted to be a guarded expression of assent. But even granted that another interpretation is possible, the fact remains that at a supreme crisis when asked categorically by the highest resident official of the Roman government

[1] Mark 14: 61, 62; cf. Matt. 26: 63, 64; Luke 22: 66–71.

whether he was king of the Jews or no, he refused to deny his claims.[1] We must accept the straightforward honesty of the Master. This, when applied to the interview with Pilate, seems to make clear his consciousness of his own Messiahship.

There is an earlier event than any of those recorded above which, although less specific, is almost as significant. It is the answer of Jesus to the messengers from John the Baptist.[2] It was too early in his ministry for him to use the word Messiah as applying to himself, but in reply to the question as to whether he was "he that should come" — *i.e.* the Christ, he referred to the various well-known signs of Messianic blessing, which marked his work. He made it so clear that there was no chance for misunderstanding his real meaning.

In John we are given two other instances. Jesus tells the woman of Samaria that he is the long-looked-for Christ,[3] and bears similar

[1] Matt. 27:11; Mark 15:2; Luke 23:3; John 18:37; cf. constant unrebuked use by followers of Christ of term "son of David," Matt. 9:27, etc.

[2] Matt. 11:3–6. [3] John 4:25, 26; cf. Luke 7:20–23.

testimony to the Jews in the Temple.[1] So with this evidence,[2] supplemented by his warnings against being deceived by false Christs,[3] and by the use of other titles such as "the Son of man" discussed later (see p. 79), there can be no doubt but that our Lord claimed to be the Christ, the responsible representative of the highest power and love of God on earth. His own testimony makes it easy for us to understand the words of the people of Samaria, "We have heard *him* ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." [4]

2. *Master of the Present.* We turn now from Christ as the Master of the Past, to Christ as the Master of the Present Life. Our object here is to show his consciousness of a unique position among men. This may be considered under the following divisions:

[1] John 10: 24, 25.

[2] Cf. Matt. 22: 41–46. Jesus' statement on the road to Emmaus is also to the point for those who accept its authenticity, Luke 24: 25–27.

[3] Matt. 24: 4, 5, 23, 24; Mark 13: 21, 22; cf. 13: 6.

[4] John 4: 41, 42.

A. Consciousness of Complete Righteousness.

B. Consciousness of Absolute Leadership.

C. Consciousness of Authority.

D. Consciousness of Founding the Kingdom.

E. Consciousness of Mastery of Nature.

F. Consciousness of Revealing God's Character.

G. Consciousness of Power to Forgive Sins.

H. Consciousness of Unique Sonship.

A. Consciousness of Complete Righteousness. In the world's history there has been but one known person so completely consecrated to God that he was apparently conscious, on reaching early manhood, of no thought or word or act that was not in obedience to his Father's will. Jesus Christ knew himself to be altogether righteous, because he was entirely obedient, completely consecrated to the service of God. At the threshold of his ministry, when John hesitates to baptize him into the formal community of the redeemed, we hear the Master saying: "Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to

fulfil all righteousness."[1] And from that time on there is not the slightest evidence of his feeling that he was not accomplishing this purpose; while even before it we have the beautiful story of the boy Jesus tarrying in the Temple on his "Father's business."[2] He lived the all-obedient life and was conscious of it: "the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him."[3] At the end of his life, realizing that neither sins of commission nor of omission can be laid up to his charge, we hear him exclaiming: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished [the Greek word means carried through completely] the work which thou gavest me to do."[4] The entire lack of any consciousness of sin is impressive, especially when we realize how exalted his ideals were, and when we remember that he denounced sin in every form, calling on men to repent.

In some of these respects he differed from the Jewish leaders who preceded him, such as

[1] Matt. 3:15. [2] Luke 2:49.
[3] John 8:29. [4] John 17:4.

David, Isaiah, Ezra, and the writers of the Psalms, as well as from the greatest Christians who followed him, such as St. Paul, Augustine, and Luther. These constantly lamented their sins and craved forgiveness. It was not so with Jesus. He knew that his life had no waste in it, no break. There was no hiatus which distinguished the purpose of God from its fulfillment in him. The most delicate conscience the world has known shows nowhere any sign of repentance, for he had committed no act which required it. And not only do we find such expressions of satisfaction with the life which, with God's help, he has lived, but in one place at least he throws down the challenge to any one to find a trace of sin in him. He alone could say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" [1] for he alone knew himself to be sinless, perfect.[2] The prince of darkness had no availing power over him,[3] for Jesus had completely overcome the world.[4]

[1] John 8:46; cf. 15:22.
[2] Luke 6:40; cf. Matt. 19:21.
[3] Matt. 4:10, 11; cf. John 14:30.
[4] John 16:33.

B. Consciousness of Absolute Leadership. And it is because of this perfect righteousness that he has become what he claimed to be, our leader, our ideal. To do as Jesus did, or as he would do in our circumstances, becomes the goal of all Christian endeavor, as he himself, knowing the uniqueness of his example, taught that it should be. The short, categorical summons, "follow me,"[1] made an earnest disciple of Levi the Publican. "Come ye after me"[2] constituted his command to Simon and Andrew. "Come, take up the cross, and follow me"[3] were the last words addressed to the rich young man who sought God's kingdom. "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me"[4] is the oft-repeated statement of the essence of the gospel.

There is no thought in Jesus' mind of a higher level of character and life than he gives us. That we should be like him by walking in his footsteps, by making him our

[1] Luke 5:27. [2] Mark 1:17.
[3] Mark 10:21; Matt. 19:21; cf. Matt. 16:24.
[4] Mark 8:34.

absolute Lord, is his frequently expressed wish. His claim of mastery is so far-reaching that our devotion to him — the "captain of our salvation" — transcends in importance our obligations to our nearest kindred. Should a conflict of duties arise, it is the latter that must yield, — our love for Jesus must be the supreme, all-determining thing.[1] We have not two masters to follow, "for one is your Master, *even* Christ."[2] He demands complete self-surrender, entire renunciation of the world, of those who would follow him.[3] We must love as he loved,[4] no more is possible. "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord."[5] In a word he is conscious of being the rightful Lord of the lives of men, whose leadership is indisputable, and to whom devotion, as illustrated by the woman with the box of precious ointment,[6] should be unrestrained.

Jesus' conviction of his divine leadership is also shown by his accepting faith in his

[1] Matt. 10:37; Luke 14:26; cf. Luke 11:23.
[2] Matt. 23:8, 10; cf. 26:18; Mark 11:3; 14:14.
[3] Luke 14:33. [4] John 15:12; 13:34. [5] Matt. 10:25.
[6] Matt. 26:7–13; Mark 14:3–10; John 12:7, 8.

person as the only requisite for salvation (see p. 82), and by the institution of the Lord's Supper, the great Christian service. This was intended primarily as a memorial feast, — one that should keep alive among men the character and teachings of the Master. Had we no other witness to Christ than the existence in the early days of this ceremony, and the preservation both in Gospels [1] and Epistles [2] of references to it, we might well imagine that one in his right mind, who commanded this ceremony in his own memory, must have been conscious of a leadership among men that gave him a relationship of peculiar oneness with God.

C. Consciousness of Authority. That Jesus spoke "with authority and not as the scribes" [3] is generally recognized. His message was self-authenticating, without the need of appeal to "signs" or to tradition. His method of replying to those questioning his position is striking.[4] He was conscious of the absolute

[1] Matt. 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19, 20.
[2] I Cor. 10:16; 11:24.
[3] Matt. 7:29; Mark 1:22; cf. Luke 4:35, 36.
[4] Matt. 21:23; cf. Mark 11:27–33; 12:12.

truth of his positive teachings in the realm of morals and religion. This stands out most clearly in the Fourth Gospel, but its roots are in the Synoptics. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know." [1] He knew, there was not the shadow of doubt in his mind, that the Father had given him extraordinary power, [2] and that his profound teaching of spiritual principles was God's teaching. Hear also the certainty with which he exclaims "whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock," [3] and "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." [4] There is a ring of assurance in these utterances. "Ye call me Master and Lord," said Christ, "and ye say well; for *so* I am." [5] So great is his realization of his own absoluteness that he demands obedience on the part of his followers. [6] "Follow me" [7] is the oft-re-

[1] John 3:11; cf. 8:38.
[2] Matt. 28:18; cf. John 13:3.
[3] Matt. 7:24.
[4] John 8:51.
[5] John 13:13; cf. Luke 19:31.
[6] Matt. 10:37.
[7] Matt. 4:19; 8:22, and *passim*.

peated summons in all the gospels. It is a command, not an invitation, and it comes from one who could say with assurance, even according to one of the Synoptics, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father." [1]

It is also noteworthy that the expressed faith of others in him brought out his complete approval. He commended the centurion's faith in his powers.[2] He healed the leper who said, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." [3] In at least one Johannine passage he is quoted as laying claim to the sole mediatorship between God and man in the familiar words, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." [4] He is also sensible of his authority to transfer miraculous powers to others.[5] He believes himself to be Lord of the Sabbath,[6] and of

[1] Matt. 11:27.

[2] Matt. 8:5–13; cf. Luke 7:1–10. [3] Matt. 8:2.

[4] John 14:6; cf. John 10:1; Matt. 11:27.

[5] Luke 9:1; cf. Matt. 18:19; cf. also his consciousness of power to forgive sins (see p. 73).

[6] Mark 2:28; Matt. 12:8; Luke 6:5.

greater dignity than the very Temple of Israel itself.[1] Yet, conscious of his superiority, he refuses to submit his claims to the constituted authorities of the Jewish church.[2] He knew that his words would cause division and strife even in the same family,[3] but that was of little account in comparison with the acceptance of the truth. It was to bear witness to this that he came into the world,[4] and his frequent assertion of the truth of his message and person [5] is but another expression of his consciousness of authority; while his statement, recorded in all the Synoptics, that his words (the non-acceptance of which would incur the divine disfavor [6]) were more enduring than the very heavens and earth [7] — even when figuratively interpreted — implies the highest sense of their eternal absoluteness.

When his authority was challenged as by

[1] Matt. 12:6. [2] Mark 11:28–33.
[3] Luke 12:51, 52. [4] John 18:37.
[5] John 8:14; 14:6; cf. John 8:45; 16:17; Luke 19:27, etc.
[6] Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; cf. Mark 10:32.
[7] Matt. 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33.

John the Baptist,[1] or by the Scribes and Pharisees,[2] or by the Sadducees,[3] or by the Chief Priests and Elders,[4] or by Herod,[5] his attitude showed that he would not discuss the matter — his message and his deeds of mercy spoke convincingly for themselves — and no external sign would help.[6] And yet at least once, in the course of his regular work, he gave a visible example of his authoritative mission by driving the buyers and sellers out of the Temple[7] — an astonishing act for a layman in these sacred precincts. Such words and actions are convincing testimony of his consciousness of authority.[8]

D. Consciousness of Founding the Kingdom. The essence of Christ's gospel was the preaching of the kingdom of God. This is shown by the emphasis on the kingdom in his parables, and by the close collocation of "gospel" and "kingdom"[1] in many of his sayings. In Matthew we have "the gospel of the kingdom" (4 : 23), in Mark "the gospel

[1] Matt. 11 : 2–6. [2] Matt. 12 : 38–42.
[3] Matt. 16 : 1–4. [4] Mark 11 : 27–33. [5] Luke 23 : 8, 9.
[6] Mark 8 : 11, 12; John 6 : 30. [7] Matt. 21 : 12, 13.
[8] See also below in discussion of Christ as Judge.

of the kingdom of God" (1 : 14), in Luke "the glad tidings of the kingdom of God" (8 : 1). His thought of the kingdom was a joyous one, as befits the surroundings of Galilee, rather than those of stern Judea — and his illustrations of it were largely drawn from the world of nature about him.

That God's kingdom on earth was in the thought of Jesus bound up with his own person, is evidenced by all the gospels. It has been already implied in the study of his consciousness of being the Messiah, but a few other facts should be brought out here. Among his earliest words are "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," [1] and over one hundred times later we find him quoted as referring to his society as a kingdom of which he is conscious of being the head.[2] When we remember that this kingdom is to be both universal and eternal, the magnitude of the claim is apparent. It is this coming of the kingdom which the Master lays down as the one thing his apostles are to preach.[3]

[1] Matt. 4 : 17; cf. Mark 1 : 15; Luke 4 : 44.
[2] Cf. Matt. 25 : 34.
[3] Matt. 10 : 7.

Identification with it is the highest of this world's privileges.[1] Even the least of its members is greater than John the Baptist, than whom Jesus said that history had shown no greater man. If we study the parables of the kingdom recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew,[2] we will notice that in each case they show the Master sensible of the fact that the creation of this all-important divine society was his own work. Imagine the very greatest and noblest man of our time making the coming of the millennium dependent both upon the acceptance of him and of his teaching, and we can get some idea of the astonishing character of this claim, which reaches its culmination in the King's power to judge the world, referred to later.[3]

The kingdom of God, or of Heaven, was to Jesus neither exclusively internal nor external, neither exclusively present nor future. It was essentially the spiritual ideal which he created, based on doing the will of

[1] Matt. 11 : 11. [2] Matt. 13 : 24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47.
[3] See p. 87.

God, and which he made the center of his preaching, especially in the Sermon on the Mount and in the Parables. It began in his own religious experience, then became realized in the group of disciples, while little by little, like "the leaven" and "the seed," it was to spread over the world. It was also to have its supreme realization in a future state, but this, in spite of vigorous modern eschatologists, was not its fundamental feature. It was, therefore, to be an abiding religious and ethical condition of mind, resulting in right social relations, rather than a place or an event. It had to do with repentance, and faith and love — not primarily with loaves and fishes, or with earthly power, or with any new external system. In these respects the Messianic kingdom established by Jesus differed from that expected by most of his Jewish contemporaries. The mere fact that he proclaimed such a kingdom, and identified himself with it, throws important light on his divine consciousness.

E. Consciousness of Mastery of Nature's Laws. From a study of Christ's conscious

power over men to his conviction of mastery of nature's forces is a natural step in the development of our subject. We touch here on a matter which most works on Christian Evidences have done much to confuse. Fortunately, however, miracles are now regarded as the object rather than the means of Apologetics, and we are beginning to see that given an unparalleled personality, unique forms of expressing divine power are not necessarily unnatural. We must use Christ to explain the miraculous, rather than *vice versa*. The modern theory of the unity of nature is here a help, for the "miracles" of Jesus can be explained only on the ground that the divine spirit permeates man and the physical world, and that consequently this spirit of God possessed by Jesus could enter sympathetically into the potentialities of both. It was because of our Lord's wonderful power of penetrating the secrets of nature and making them his own that he could work understandingly and effectively through her varied manifestations and possibilities. To him the world of nature and the world

of spirit were bound together by an inseparable divine kinship. God was behind both, and in both.

The authenticity of some of the gospel miracles,[1] at least in their present form, is open to question, but to cut out all evidences of the miraculous (so-called) from the accounts of Christ's life is well-nigh impossible. There is hardly a page that does not bear its witness to his supernormal power. Here two forms of dogmatism are to be avoided — that of the conservative student who accepts as an exact statement of fact every miracle recorded in the Bible, without investigation, and that of the radical who assumes that whatever runs contrary to our own experience must necessarily be legendary. But our subject demands that we deal not with the miracles, as such, but with the testimony they bear to Jesus' realization of his relationship to God.

We shall take up first the miracles of healing. With many of these even the most critical spirit has little difficulty. Modern science has done much to prove the possible

[1] *E.g.* Matt. 2:9; Luke 8:33.

influence of one mind over another. So it is only necessary to think of the one whom we call the Master as conscious of possessing a dominant will to understand those miracles of which nervous or weak-willed persons were the subjects. The woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years,[1] the man sick with the palsy (paralysis),[2] Simon's wife's mother,[3] the child with the unclean spirit,[4] the man with the deaf and dumb spirit,[5] the afflicted Gadarene,[6] and many others,[7] overpowered by his strong mind, were cured through faith in his powers, which he, through the conscious possession of them, had helped to render objective. The fact is that Jesus "stirred the forces of the inner life" so mightily that they reacted effectively and impressively upon the bodily life. This is especially true in the case of various nervous disorders, such as delirium (Mark 5 : 2–20), catalepsy (Matthew 12 : 22), and epilepsy (Mark 9 : 17–29). Even the cure of those who

[1] Luke 13 : 11, 12.
[2] Mark 2 : 10–12.
[3] Luke 4 : 38, 39; cf. John 4 : 50.
[4] Luke 9 : 42.
[5] Mark 9 : 25, 26.
[6] Luke 8 : 32–35.
[7] Mark 5 : 34; 6 : 56, etc.

thought themselves blind may be similarly explained if we but grasp the power of faith — the great essential proclaimed by Jesus, and the authoritative character of his personality. There seem to have been some who, hampered by the effects of disease and dirt, had never seen, but who had faith in the deep, genuine ring of his commands, and succeeded, with his effective help, in forcing their eyes open at his bidding. So it may have been with Bartimeus,[1] and with the blind men of Bethsaida [2] and of Jericho.[3]

But when we pass from such cures, which have at least a possible explanation in the realized power of one will over another, and may therefore be classed as psychological, to those miracles which imply actual changes in the body itself — changes which are immediate, and apparently beyond the influence of the most strenuous exertion of the mind — we are carried into a field of great difficulty. It behooves us therefore to be modest and not too sure of our conclusions, especially in an age when science seems to be proving

[1] Mark 10: 51, 52. [2] Mark 8: 22. [3] Luke 18: 41, 42.

the unity of nature, and when, on the other hand, psychology and psychical research are making us realize the extraordinary range of power latent in the human spirit. We see Jesus sensible of being able to transform a withered into a whole hand,[1] and curing instantaneously a woman with an issue of blood.[2] We hear him saying to the leper "I will; be thou clean," [3] and we are told that the whitish scales disappeared at his word.[4] We see the blood pouring from the side of the high priest's servant's head, when suddenly the wound is healed by a touch from the finger of Christ and a word of assurance.[5]

But even this is not all. The Fourth Gospel gives us the story of the raising of Lazarus [6] from the dead. It is a stupendous miracle — and, if true, the mere attempt to fathom the conviction of divine power behind it is staggering. It does not entirely do away with the difficulty to explain it on

[1] Luke 6: 10. [2] Luke 8: 46, 48.
[3] Matt. 8: 2, 3; cf. Luke 5: 13; 17: 11, 19.
[4] Mark 1: 42. [5] Luke 22: 51. [6] John 11: 43, 44.

the basis of its identification with the latest of the gospels alone. St. Luke's account of Jesus' life contains two similar incidents. We can hear the words as the Saviour stood over the bier of the widow's son at Nain, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise," [1] and those similar ones recorded in all the Synoptics when Jairus' daughter was raised [2] —"maid, arise"—and we cannot escape the conviction that he who gave these commands realized the power he possessed. Such accounts in several different narratives bear telling witness to Christ's consciousness of power.[3]

It is a striking fact that the only miracle recorded by all the evangelists is the feeding of the multitude,[4] one which brings forward prominently Christ's mastery of the laws of

[1] Luke 7 : 14, 15. [2] Luke 8 : 54.

[3] The tribute money in the fish's mouth (Matt. 17 : 27), the passing of Christ through the crowd (Luke 4 : 30), and the draught of fishes (John 21 : 1–14) are not considered above. The last two named easily yield to a naturalistic interpretation, while we are not told that the tribute money (Matt. 17 : 27) was obtained in the miraculous way predicted.

[4] Matt. 14 : 18; cf. 15 : 32–38; Mark 6 : 41; Luke 9 : 16, 17; John 6 : 11.

nature. Here is a marvelous "sign," and one for which the historical evidence is so strong that it cannot be lightly dismissed. Let us put ourselves back in the scene. There are some five thousand people before him, weary and hungry. They must be fed, yet there are but five loaves and two small fishes to form the common meal. It is a rare opportunity for Jesus to relieve want. He has no thought of failure. He knows that the necessary food will be provided. If he did not fully realize that after prayer to the Father his power would in some way be vindicated, his attempt to meet the needs of the multitude would be unintelligible. Any one, sincere and in his right mind, who attempted such a task must be conscious of the mighty works of which he was capable.

We must notice also the confident way in which the Christ of John's Gospel set to work to increase the supply of the wedding wine,[1] the tone of authority in which all the Synoptics[2] give his rebuke to the stormy wind,

[1] John 2 : 7.

[2] Matt. 8 : 26; Mark 4 : 39; Luke 8 : 24.

which obeyed his "Peace, be still," [1] and the cursing of the barren fig tree.[2] These words, and others like them,[3] implying an effective mastery of the laws of the natural world, find their counterpart in the story of Christ's walking on the sea,[4] and seem to show that he believed himself the possessor of forces and influences which have not been claimed by other men of normal minds. No wonder that the disciples were astonished, and exclaimed, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" [5]

It throws some light on Jesus' view of miracles to note that to him they were not "prodigies" or "wonders," as they are to so many ignorant people. He uses the Greek equivalent of this conception but once [6] and then with disapproval. To him miracles were sometimes powers (δυνάμεις), sometimes signs (σημεῖα), but generally merely works (ἔργα) — deeds of kindness and of love. They were spontaneous, restrained,

[1] Mark 4:39. [2] Mark 11:14. [3] Luke 10:19.
[4] Mark 6:48; John 6:19. [5] Mark 4:39–41.
[6] John 4:48 (τέρατα).

dignified, helpful deeds done with a moral object — as different as possible from many of the ethically meaningless and spectacular wonders which discredit the Apocryphal Gospels. He believed them to be the result of God's power working through him, and if the Master's own view of his incarnation is grasped they can be understood. It was "with the finger of God," [1] or "by the Spirit of God," [2] or "by prayer" [3] that he was able to do his "miracles." There is no evidence that he considered them violations of natural law; the poor modern word "supernatural" is not even a New Testament conception — rather were they manifestations of the use, or direction, of latent forces, by man who is created in the image of God, and who consequently, if he draws upon his power, has a potential key to unlocking the secrets of a universe that is all one and all divine.

Miracles then, by the confidence which precedes the act, rather than by the act itself, and by the complete understanding and

[1] Luke 11 : 20. [2] Matt. 12 : 28.
[3] Matt. 17 : 21 (Revised Version).

mastery of Nature's laws which they reveal, bear testimony to Jesus' consciousness of his close relationship to Deity. Yet we must remember that they never involve absolute creation, a power which we are not told that Jesus Christ inherently possessed; and that he definitely stated that believers in him — that is those who understood and cultivated his secret of power — might do even greater works.[1]

F. Consciousness of Revealing God's Character. We pass now to the deeper expressions of our Lord in regard to his relationship to Deity, and shall consider first his consciousness of revealing God's character. Jesus came to make known to men the true nature of the one eternal God as a loving Father, holy and near at hand. He lived in his presence and spirit, being, as the unknown author of Hebrews so beautifully expresses it, the "express image" of the Father's person.[2] Such phrases as the following occur in all

[1] John 14:12.

[2] Heb. 1:3; cf. the post-resurrection statement in Matt. 28:18.

the Gospels: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father";[1] "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father";[2] "Whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me";[3] "no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and *he* to whom the Son will reveal *him*";[4] "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father."[5]

Of these five quotations, four are from the Synoptics, although all emphasize that note of divine exaltation generally associated with the Fourth Gospel. It is clear from these sayings that Jesus put forward the claim[6] to a peculiarly intimate knowledge of his Father in Heaven, and preached that the acceptance of him and of his message was

[1] Matt. 11:27. [2] John 14:8, 9; cf. 12:45.
[3] Mark 9:37; Matt. 10:40; cf. John 5:23; 3:13.
[4] Luke 10:22; Matt. 11:27; cf. John 8:19.
[5] John 10:15.
[6] Sometimes the language he is made to use in the Fourth Gospel seems almost to identify him with Deity, *e.g.* "I and my Father are one." John 10:30; cf. also John 8:15, 16; 10:38; 17:11, etc. The Christ of the Fourth Gospel also claims preëxistence; cf. John 8:58; 17:5, 24; but this finds no parallel in the Synoptics.

the equivalent of the acceptance of God. Such words could not have been used by one who was not conscious of a perfect understanding of the character of the Eternal. In fact the fatherhood of God seems to have been the only subject on which he claimed complete and unique knowledge. This is not surprising, as his message, his gospel, his glad tidings, can be reduced in essence to this — the God revealed by Jesus is a loving Father. The reconciliation of some Johannine passages expressing the unity between Father and Son in a metaphysical as well as an ethical form, especially those in the much questioned "High Priestly Prayer" of John 17, with the general tenor of the earlier gospels, and with many of the statements of the Fourth Evangelist himself, is left for the moment. Suffice it now to have brought together the most important words assigned to Jesus regarding his intimate knowledge of God, and his power to reveal his character authoritatively.[1] It is difficult to escape from the conviction that he of whom such words

[1] See also p. 75 ff.

were early recorded must have given expression to thoughts about himself and his relationship to God implying such exaltation as to have made him, in his own eyes, the embodiment in human form of the Eternal Spirit. Without some such objective basis the development of Johannine and Pauline Christology is an inexplicable mystery.

G. Consciousness of Power to Forgive Sins. There is one aspect in which all the Synoptic Gospels represent Jesus that substantiates this view and makes the transition to the theology of the Fourth Gospel less abrupt. It is his claim of power to forgive sins — which, in essence, means the transference of ability to break off evil habits, and to realize the divine life — the "peace of God which passeth all understanding." That "the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins" [1] — to restore a repentant man to right relations to God — is a claim made in the early part of the Saviour's ministry, and accredited by a divine act. The most beautiful example of his forgiveness is connected

[1] Matt. 9:6, 7; Mark 2:5; Luke 5:20, 24.

with a woman — Mary of Bethany. She had lived a bad life and was now a penitent sinner, so penitent in fact and so anxious to show her better resolve for the future by acts of kindness, that Jesus Christ, as the accredited messenger of God, forgave her sins. Twice is this forgiveness declared in terms of authority. First, to Simon, in the words, "Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven," [1] and again to the woman herself, "he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven." [2] That this power was consciously inherent in Jesus himself because of his spiritual oneness with God, and that it was not merely declarative on the part of another, seems to be shown by his words in instituting the Lord's Supper, "this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins," [3] and by his attitude when the Jews, having charged him with blasphemy for pronouncing pardon upon the paralytic — an event recorded in all the Synoptics — exclaim, "Who can forgive sins but God

[1] Luke 7 : 47. [2] Luke 7 : 48. [3] Matt. 26 : 28.

only?"[1] Far from denying his own intrinsic rights in the performance of this divine act, he deliberately asserts his privilege by curing him whose sins he had declared forgiven. The transference of this power to the Apostles[2] is a transference in appearance only. It is forgiveness declared with authority as possible only through faith in Christ, who gave his life "a ransom for many."[3]

H. Consciousness of Unique Sonship. But it is in his own self-characterizations that the consciousness of his divine mission is the most apparent. This is especially noteworthy if we accept the historicity of the Fourth Gospel. Here Jesus calls himself the "bread of life,"[4] "the bread of God,"[5] and tells us that those who make him their spiritual food shall live forever. He is "the door,"[6] by which "if any man enter in he shall be saved." He is the "light of the

[1] Matt. 9:6; Mark 2:7; Luke 5:21.
[2] John 20:23; cf. Matt. 16:19; 18:18.
[3] Mark 10:45; Matt. 20:28.
[4] John 6:35, 48. [5] John 6:33; cf. 6:31.
[6] John 10:9.

world," [1] "the good shepherd," [2] "the way, the truth, and the life." [3] Such self-designations are not confined to the last of the gospels, for in the Synoptics he calls himself "the sower," [4] "the bridegroom," [5] "the rock," [6] the corner stone of redeemed humanity [7] — statements that are fully as significant as their Johannine equivalents. They are without parallel in the history of the world's great men. Here is one who is reported to have called himself by names that carry with them no knowledge of sin, no imperfection, and who claims to be the one who alone can satisfy the spiritual cravings of man. His person is so exalted that to follow him,[8] or to have faith [9] in him, is the all-important test.

These self-characterizations lead up to four titles adopted by Jesus which imply reali-

[1] John 9:5. [2] John 10:11.
[3] John 14:6; cf. John 11:25. [4] Luke 8:5, 11.
[5] Mark 2:19; Luke 5:35.
[6] Luke 6:47, 48; cf. Matt. 7:24; 16:18.
[7] Luke 20:17.
[8] Matt. 8:22; Mark 1:27 and *passim*.
[9] John 11:25 and *passim* in Fourth Gospel.

zation of his unique Sonship. They are "the Son," "the Son of God," "the Son of man," and "the Messiah" or "the Christ." All but the second are used so frequently by the Synoptists as to call for special attention. The last has already been discussed (see p. 37).

Whenever Jesus calls himself "the Son" [1] it is in connection,[2] either by way of contrast or coöperation, with the Father. An impressive instance recorded in Matthew and Luke is that where he states that knowledge of the Father is confined to the Son "and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*." [3] We are all sons of God, but he calls himself not merely a son, but the son. Just as there are many fathers but only one who is to all men "the Father," so there is but one son who is "the Son" to mankind. Christ in thus naming himself asserts that he bears an essential relationship to Deity, a conclusion that is borne out by his frequent use of the

[1] Matt. 11:27; 21:37; 28:19; Mark 13:32; Luke 10:22; John 5:19, 20, 21, 23, 26; 8:36; 17:1.

[2] John 8:36 is an exception to the letter of this statement.

[3] Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:22.

phrase "My Father," [1] the personal pronoun implying intimate connection between the two. But there is nothing in this simple title that is essentially and necessarily Messianic.

The second title, the use of which is recorded less frequently, adds little to our knowledge of Jesus' thought about himself. It is really but the complete expression of the idea clearly implied in the first. We find it several times in the Fourth Gospel, [2] and once in the Synoptics, [3] but there are other occasions when Christ was addressed as "the Son of God" and accepted the title without rebuke.[4] It is a tacit assertion of the fact that in him God has become incarnate — the chosen representative of the chosen people. The title is unquestionably Messianic in character, but not necessarily exclusively so. Israel was God's son,[5] so were its

[1] Matt. 7:21; 15:13; 16:17; 25:34; 26:29, 39; and *passim* in all gospels.

[2] John 5:25; 9:35, 37; 10:36; 11:4. Used by others of Christ; Matt. 27:54; Mark 1:1; John 1:35–40; 6:69; 11:34; 17:7; 20:31; and Luke 1:35.

[3] Matt. 27:43. [4] Matt. 14:33; Mark 3:11, 12.

[5] Exodus 4:22 ff.

kings[1] — and naturally, therefore, the chosen people's Messiah might bear the same title. A metaphysical relationship to Deity is neither excluded nor demanded by it, but Jesus has become God's special ambassador[2] to a needy world. Such an office cannot be shared; it must from its very nature be unique.[3] This thought is also brought out in the parable of the Vineyard.[4] The absent husbandman's servants have been maltreated and killed as, one after another, they have been sent to secure the fruits of the distant estate. Then, as a last resort, the owner sends his only son, but he too is killed. There can be no doubt as to Jesus' meaning. The husbandman is God the Father, and his "one son the well-beloved" is no other than he himself.

The third title, "the Son of man"[5] —

[1] Psalms 86: 16. [2] Cf. Eph. 6: 20; II Cor. 5: 20.

[3] Christ was called "Son of God" by centurion, Matt. 27: 54; by disciples, Matt. 14: 33; by fourth evangelist, John 20: 31; by Baptist, John 1: 34; by Nathaniel, John 1: 49; by Peter, John 6: 69; by Martha, John 11: 27; by Jews (quoting Jesus), John 19: 7.

[4] Mark 12: 1–9; Matt. 21: 37; Luke 20: 13.

[5] Matt. 8: 20; Mark 14: 41; Luke 9: 56; John 12: 23 and *passim*.

discussed in scores of learned treatises — is in some ways the most suggestive of all. The Synoptics give us sixty-nine instances [1] in which Jesus so called himself. It is evident that it was his favorite self-designation, although Stephen is the only one of his early followers who is known to have used it [2] of him. The title as used by Christ can only be understood in connection with the great prophecy in the book of Daniel, when the Messiah coming on the clouds of Heaven is described as "one like the [a] son of man." [3] The image of this passage took firm hold upon the imagination of the Jews, as we know from several sources, and especially from the Book of Enoch, which appeared in the century before the Christian era. It became firmly fixed in the popular imagination as a Messianic title, and Jesus' use of it was so understood. It had the advantage of being long associated with the glorious ushering in of the eternal kingdom, and yet of associating the Messiah with the human race.

[1] Matthew, 30; Mark, 14; Luke, 25.
[2] Acts 7: 56. [3] Daniel 7: 13.

This figure of the Son man has the effect of taking the Messiahship out of its exclusively Davidic[1] and nationalistic environment, and giving it a more divine and more universal significance. As the failure of Jesus' plans for a world transformation in his life-time became more and more apparent, he seems to have seized more tenaciously upon the wonderful vision of the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven, and to have thought of it as referring to his own return in glory.[2] This frequently gives a note of divine triumph to his use of this symbolic title, without ever disassociating it entirely from humanity and the earth on which we live.

3. *Master of the Future.* It has been shown by reference to the gospels that Jesus knew himself to be (first) the Fulfiller of the ideals of the Past; and (second) the Complete Master of the Present Life. It is necessary now to take up briefly (third), Christ as the Master of the Future.

[1] The difficult passage Mark 12:35–37 is believed by many scholars to be a denial of the idea that the Messiah must necessarily be the descendant or successor of David.

[2] Matt. 16:27, etc.

His knowledge of his relation to man's future may be discussed under six heads:

A. Consciousness of Determining Salvation.

B. Consciousness of Decreeing Judgment.

C. Consciousness of Universal Mission.

D. Consciousness of Suffering for the Sins of Humanity.

E. Consciousness of Foreknowing, Resurrection.

F. Consciousness of Returning to Influence the World.

With all of these beliefs, purposes and acts Jesus claims to be vitally connected.

A. Consciousness of Determining Salvation. The New Testament doctrine of Salvation starts with faith in the person of Christ. It is not belief in dogmas about God or about Christ — it is trust, faith in the living person of the Master himself. The idea expressed by "faith" and by the old English word "fide," rather than by the too exclusively intellectual act identified with "belief" and "believe," is most characteristic. The message of Jesus is "Come unto me, . . . and I will give you rest,"[1]

[1] Matt. 11:28.

both present and future. Salvation is physical, through cures; spiritual, through a repentant and renewed soul life; and eternal, through faith which masters death — and in each case it is brought about by Christ. He is the Great Physician who saves man from suffering by many wonderful cures,[1] but these are merely a means to an end — the fitting of men for a higher sin-free life, the saving of their moral and spiritual natures. This was the great purpose of Jesus' coming into the world. He came "to seek and to save that which was lost," [2] or, as the Fourth Gospel puts it, that we "should not perish, but have everlasting life." [3] His very presence was, in his judgment, enough to bring safety to a ship's company in a storm,[4] and salvation to a household,[5] while faith in him sufficed to save both a sinful woman [6] and the centurion's servant.[7] The Greek word for "save" occurs 54 times in the gospels, in over one third of the cases with a religious sig-

[1] Mark 5 : 34. [2] Luke 19 : 10. [3] John 3 : 16.
[4] Matt. 8 : 26. [5] Luke 19 : 9. [6] Luke 7 : 50.
[7] Matt. 8 : 5–10.

nificance. That Jesus used it so frequently in the way he did, with reference both to the Father in whom he urged men to trust implicitly,[1] and to himself — and in both cases in connection with eternal life — is evidence of his conviction that he and his message held an important relationship to man's future.

Here is a man among men telling them that their spiritual condition is dependent upon implicit confidence in him and his teachings. This is specially emphasized in the Fourth Gospel. If men will follow him salvation will begin here below, for eternal life is dependent only upon knowledge of God and of Christ, and it is decreed by the Master himself.[2] It is a remarkable claim — that of a despised carpenter's son, making Heaven and Hell depend upon degree of relationship to him. Whether these terms were used by Jesus to refer to anything more than radically different states of mind, matters little. The "keys of the kingdom of heaven" were claimed by him according to well-attested

[1] Matt. 6: 25–34. [2] John 17: 3; 10: 28.

Synoptic tradition,[1] which also records his saying that his life was given as "a ransom for many,"[2] as well as the wonderful words — as impressive as anything in John — restricting the true knowledge of the Heavenly Father to Christ "and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*."[3] He believed himself identified with man's future happiness or the opposite. It was he, the Son of man, who "shall gather together his elect from the four winds."[4] "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life,"[5] "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life . . . The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."[6] With these expressions and many others,[7] Jesus makes salvation depend on relationship to him.

An interesting collection of passages of this

[1] Matt. 16:19; 18:18. [2] Matt. 20:28.
[3] Matt. 11:27. [4] Matt. 24:31; cf. Luke 13:29.
[5] John 6:47; cf. 4:14. [6] John 5:24–25; cf. 11:25.
[7] Luke 18:42; 7:50; cf. John 3:15–18; 6:40.

character is that in which rewards are based on deeds done "for my name's sake" [1] or "for my sake," phrases that are of frequent occurrence in the Synoptics, and imply a representative relation of Christ to humanity's future. A typical passage, similar in import to the Johannine passages quoted above, is found in Luke: "for whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." [2] Another equally characteristic saying, showing his consciousness of determining salvation in a very impressive way, is in Matthew: "every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." [3] It would have been difficult for Jesus to have chosen words that indicated more clearly his conviction that eternal life for the individual was bound up with his person and mission.

[1] Mark 13: 13, etc.

[2] Luke 9: 24; cf. Matt. 5: 11; Luke 6: 20; 21: 17; Mark 9: 41. "In my name" has the same thought; cf. also "in remembrance of me," I Cor. 11: 24–25.

[3] Matt. 19: 29.

B. Consciousness of Decreeing Judgment. There are passages in all the gospels in which Jesus asserts that he is to be the judge on the great day of judgment. We need not think of this day as the same for all men, but as the test occurring for each man after death. In a way Jesus thought of this as repeated by God after every act of a man's life, but not to the exclusion of a great judgment by which the general stamp of a man's character on earth is summed up in one decision. We do not state that upon this decision rests unalterably the whole of a man's future, for Jesus believed that growth into the likeness of God is a gradual and eternal process; but upon the earthly life summed up for man in his judgment day, depends his power of appreciating God, and hence the determination of whether the future life is to be a heaven or a hell for him. Matthew gives us Jesus' words: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from an-

other, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats." [1] In Mark we have: "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." [2] In Luke, Christ as the Judge apportions kingdoms over which his faithful apostles are to rule in the future world,[3] and the basis of judgment is acceptance or rejection of his person: [4] while the Christ of the Fourth Gospel tells us that "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." [5]

So the most significant fact regarding judgment in the gospels is that it is connected with Christ: "he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it"; [6] "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of

[1] Matt. 25:31, 32; cf. 7:20–23; 10:32; 25:34; 19:28; 25:21; 16:27.
[2] Mark 8:38.
[3] Luke 22:19, 30; cf. 21:36.
[4] Luke 12:8, 9.
[5] John 5:22; 12:48; 5:26, 27; cf. 14:2.
[6] Matt. 10:39.

God." [1] The picture of the Son of man as the great judge is particularly emphasized in Matthew's Gospel, where he is pictured in apocalyptic language as sending out his angels as the reapers to divide the wheat from the tares,[2] and the sheep from the goats.[3]

Christ is Judge, and similarly he is the test, the criterion of judgment. Failure to appreciate him,[4] or to put in practice his teachings,[5] or to believe in him,[6] or to accept his invitation,[7] carries with it his severe condemnation. So did being ashamed of him [8] and rejecting his disciples,[9] while on the contrary the woman who was a sinner received forgiveness of sins because of the special kindness [10] she showed to Jesus. There is no clearer evidence of his remarkable self-consciousness than this conviction, which stands out in all the gospels, that he was called upon to judge the world. This was thought of as a natural result of his Messiah-

[1] Luke 12:8. [2] Matt. 13:24–30, 37–43.
[3] Matt. 25:32–33. [4] Matt. 11:21–22.
[5] Matt. 7:26–28. [6] John 3:36. [7] Matt. 22:1–10.
[8] Mark 8:38. [9] Luke 10:10–14; cf. Matt. 10:14.
[10] Luke 8:47.

ship, and was specially associated with his second coming.[1]

C. Consciousness of Universal Mission. Jesus' consciousness of his mastery of the future is also evidenced by his belief that his message was universal in scope. In this connection his attitude towards the Gentiles is important as showing the breadth of his mission, in contrast with the exclusive Jewish ideal of his day. He was as willing to help the Roman centurion,[2] the Syro-Phœnician woman,[3] and the Samaritan,[4] as he was any Israelite. It was the leaders of his own exclusive people — the Scribes and Pharisees — that appear throughout the gospels as meriting his most severe rebukes. So it is not surprising that the Jewish inhabitants of Nazareth put him out of the synagogue for emphasizing cases where Gentiles had been blessed by the activities of Jewish prophets.[5] And when driven from his home city he took up his abode in "Galilee of the Gentiles," [6] and later visited the despised

[1] See p. 97. [2] Luke 7: 2–10; Matt. 8: 5–13.
[3] Mark 7: 26. [4] Luke 17: 11–19. [5] Luke 4: 25–30.
[6] Matt. 4: 15.

Samaritans,[1] Decapolis,[2] and other Gentile communities. The Baptist proved himself a good prophet when he proclaimed that Jesus was to be "a light to lighten the Gentiles." [3]

His parables, the Lord's Prayer, and the Sermon on the Mount are universal in their implied scope, a fact whose significance as it affects our subject can only be fully appreciated when considered in the light of the nationalistic and particularistic character of contemporary Judaism. In some cases this universality is definitely claimed. For instance, his teachings are for "all nations," [4] not for the Jews only, for "many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" [5]—a verse whose context shows conclusively its reference to the Gentiles. His message is not merely for Palestine, but it is to be "preached throughout the whole world," [6] and it was

[1] John 4:40. [2] Matt. 4:25. [3] Luke 2:32.
[4] Mark 13:10; Luke 24:47.
[5] Matt. 8:11; cf. 13:22; John 12:32. [6] Mark 14:9.

because of God's love for all humanity that he was sent.[1] No one in his sound mind could make such claims without knowing that his was the authoritative religious message, and that he was the absolute teacher of the things of the soul. His convictions on this point are the more remarkable because the Jews were looking for a Messiah to exalt primarily their own race — not for one whose direct appeal was to humanity at large. It is clear that Jesus felt that his first mission was to his own people, whose Messiah he was, but it is equally clear that all mankind was included in his vision and in his sense of ultimate divine responsibility. This universality of his consciousness is shown in his last recorded command to the disciples to "teach all nations"[2] and to be witnesses unto him to "the uttermost part of the earth."[3] He was conscious of being the determining factor both in immediate and ultimate salvation not for the Jews only but for the world.

D. Consciousness of Suffering for the Sins

[1] John 3 : 16, 17. [2] Matt. 28 : 19. [3] Acts 1 : 8.

of Humanity. That "the Son of man must suffer many things" [1] "and be rejected of this generation" [2] was one of the convictions of Jesus, and this in spite of the fact that such ideas were repellent to contemporary Judaism. He was even aware that one of the inner band of disciples was to prove the traitor,[3] handing him over "to be crucified" because "he was reckoned among the transgressors." [4] The thought of the suffering Messiah of Isaiah had impressed itself upon his mind, and he could not escape the conclusion that he was to "be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day." [5] He had a hard time ahead and he knew it, and yet he faced his fate serenely: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" [6] Jesus even had a clear intuition that Jerusalem,[7] the sacred city, was to be the scene of these pregnant and tragic events, and that among them were to be included his mocking,

[1] Luke 9:22; cf. Mark 9:12; Matt. 17:12; etc.
[2] Luke 17:25. [3] Mark 14:18; Matt. 26:23; etc.
[4] Luke 22:37. [5] Luke 9:22. [6] Luke 12:50.
[7] Matt. 16:21; 20:18; Mark 10:33; Luke 18:31.

scourging, and other humiliating details[1] which actually occurred. This is all part of the earliest records, and its great significance is due to the fact that the events predicted by Jesus were so much at variance with the dominant world-conquering Messianic expectations of the time. These paid little attention to a humble and suffering Messiah until a generation after the death of Jesus, when the destruction of Jerusalem made it seem right to think of a deliverer who could share the sad experiences of his people. The fact that Jesus could see back of contemporary thought to the higher ideal of "the suffering servant" of God, and forward to its extraordinary realization in him, speaks volumes for his consciousness of a unique mission. His predictions of what actually happened are impressive testimony to his conviction that his death was connected both with the past of Israel by prophecy, and with the future of humanity by act, for he knew that it was only by the path of the Cross that salvation could come

[1] Mark 10:33, 34; Matt. 20:19; Luke 18:32, 33.

to man[1] through "the remission of sins." He believed that his blood was shed and his body given on Calvary for the sake of mankind.[2] And although there is no evidence that he even dreamed of modern substitutionary doctrines of the Atonement, yet the basis on which they were built up is found in a well-attested and self-revealing saying recorded by the earliest evangelist, "the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."[3] To predict a dying Messiah, suffering voluntarily, and not so much with, as *for* his people, required at the time the confidence of divine inspiration.

E. Consciousness of Foreknowing Resurrection. It is perhaps possible to see how Jesus, merely from a study of historical conditions, might have predicted his violent death at the hands of the authorities. But when we consider his prophecies in regard to his rising from the dead, we seem to leave the field of

[1] Matt. 26:28; cf. Mark 14:24; Luke 12:32.
[2] I Cor. 11:24; Luke 22:20, etc.
[3] Mark 10:45; Matt. 20:28.

the natural for that of the supernatural. No amount of merely human calculation of chances or probabilities could have led Jesus to predict an event, which, leaving out those miracles of which he was himself the cause, was in the form it took, or at least in the assurance it carried to others, without parallel or precedent. Even if the well-known words "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"[1] are not to be taken as an historical prophecy, yet we find the resurrection predicted in the early part of the Galilean ministry,[2] and at Cæsarea Philippi just after Peter's confession,[3] and again on the way down from the Mount of Transfiguration.[4] It is repeated as the little band starts for Jerusalem,[5] and on the night of the Last Supper[6] it is heard again. The references are so frequent, even in the oldest record, and seem so natural in their present setting, that to rule them out entirely as later additions seems almost impossible within the canons of sound criticism.

[1] John 2:19. [2] Matt. 12:40; cf. 17:22.
[3] Mark 8:31; Matt. 16:21. [4] Mark 9:9.
[5] Luke 18:32; Matt. 26:32.
[6] Matt. 26:32; Mark 14:28.

In making this statement it should be remembered that Jesus' confidence that he should "rise again" is almost equally impressive whether considered as a prophecy of a bodily, or of a purely spiritual resurrection, provided the latter was so real and vital that the fact of continued existence was brought home convincingly to the disciples on the third day. Each gospel and each stage of the gospel history bears the same testimony to the belief of Jesus that God would raise him from the dead. His conviction that he would be justified in the eyes of the world as the Messiah through the knowledge that his spirit had overcome death, is evidence that he felt his relation to the Eternal to be of such a character as to make his person unique. This is another link in the proof that he believed his future to be bound up in some vital way with the future of humanity.

F. Consciousness of Returning to Influence the World. That Jesus believed that his contact with humanity would outlast the grave is indubitable; and we would be untrue to his convictions if we thought of this

influence as merely that of the memory of his life and character. It was far more direct and more truly vital. In the Synoptic Gospels [1] we have predominantly the picture (in Jesus' own thought) of his immediate [2] and sudden second coming "on the clouds of heaven" — the so-called Parousia — and the setting up of the all-powerful eternal kingdom in which he was to be the great judge. In the Fourth Gospel we have the thought of the gradual spiritual coming of Jesus to every believer in and through the Holy Spirit.[3] Both views go back to the Master himself, although the latter was further developed by disciples of devout mind and philosophical interests to help explain the failure of Jesus to appear suddenly, as predicted, in his Messianic glory. In other words Jesus seems to have believed in his own objective second coming and in the formal setting up of

[1] Mark 13 : 26, 27; 14 : 62; Matt. 24 *passim;* Luke 21 : 27; etc.

[2] Matt. 10 : 23; Mark 9 : 1; 13 : 30. In other places Jesus shows less certainty as to the immediateness of his return; cf. Matt. 24 : 36; Mark 13 : 32.

[3] John 14 : 26; 15 : 26; 16 : 13, 14, etc.

the Messianic kingdom — but not to the exclusion of his gradual spiritual coming to his disciples after his death, as some "consistent eschatologists" try to make out. Perhaps the thought of the second appearance in glory — in accordance with the original Messianic expectation of the Jews — was almost a necessity for Jesus if he was to satisfy himself and his disciples that he, in his humility, a "suffering servant," was indeed the Messiah. When he referred to the "coming of the Son of man" he had in mind, beyond question, the great prophecies of the Book of Daniel,[1] and thought that this coming would usher in a new divine world-order. These references have so much of the local apocalyptic coloring and imagery in them that it is difficult to determine their exact meaning. They have to be dealt with more as poetry than as prose, even though Jesus himself may have conceived of them rather literally. But it is evident that the essential fact involved is the continuing and increasing of the influence of Jesus through his entering vitally into the experience of the

[1] Daniel 7: 13.

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individual and of the world even after his death in Palestine. This is classically expressed by words attributed to Christ in the last verse of Matthew's Gospel,[1] which imply his abiding spiritual presence in a way similar to that so often indicated in John xiv to xvi. The mere fact that Jesus, according to all of the Synoptists, predicts his future "coming in the clouds of Heaven" [2] is evidence that he thought he was to be God's representative returning to help the world in a supernatural way.

In the Fourth Gospel we are told that, although absent in the body, he will not leave us comfortless, but will come to us through the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, whom the Father will send in his name, and one of whose chief functions will be to interpret his life and teachings to the men of each generation.[3] This is a characteristic Johannine interpretation, which does not appear in the earlier records in the same form. The Spirit will

[1] Matt. 28:20.
[2] Matt. 26:64; Mark 14:62; Luke 21:27.
[3] John 14:18, 20, 26; cf. 15:26.

reprove the world of sin, and act as the stimulus to conscience, always keeping belief in Christ as of primary importance, and glorifying his person before men.[1] He is to bring no new message, only to interpret Christ's person and teachings to successive ages.[2] Their Lord and Master is to be removed from their sight, but he is to love and help them [3] still.

Even in the Synoptics he is to be the living inspirer of their preaching, who will make their message irresistible,[4] and it is in his "name" that miracles are to be wrought,[5] while he promises that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" [6] — a Synoptic passage which shows the most exalted Christology, and supplies a well-attested basis for the doctrine of the Abiding Christ as given in John. Whether we think of the second coming as spiritual, and subjective, according to the

[1] John 16:8, 9, 14, 15. [2] John 16:15.
[3] John 15:10; cf. 14:12; 15:7. [4] Luke 21:15.
[5] Mark 9:39; cf. prayer in his name, John 14:13; 16:23, 24.
[6] Matt. 18:20.

Fourth Evangelist, or as largely physical and objective, according to the earlier writers, or as a combination of both, we cannot escape from the conviction that Jesus thought that he was to be as much Master of the Future, as we have shown him to be Master of the Past and of the Present.

IV. CONCLUSION — INTERPRETATION OF THE SELF-REVEALED CHRIST

We have completed a systematic outline treatment of Jesus Christ's self-consciousness on the human and the divine sides as shown in the gospels. An attempt must now be made to bring together and harmonize these two aspects. There are two words which bear in themselves the explanation of the unique phenomena of Christ's personality. The first is the word "Messiah," the key to the self-consciousness of Jesus; the second, the word "Incarnation," which interprets the Messiahship spiritually in universal and eternal terms. The first ideal was a purely Jewish one with clear historical roots and nationalistic tendencies. This Jesus seized upon and accepted, "fulfilling" it — that is filling it full of new and broader spiritual significance.

His people had been looking for a great deliverer and redeemer — the Messiah, and Jesus claimed the title for himself. This has been set forth at length above and is merely referred to here to emphasize it as the main explanation of what Jesus thought of himself.

The second word, "Incarnation," is of special significance as we pass from the field of Christ's self-consciousness, where its roots clearly appear, to its explanation and interpretation for our own thought. This doctrine, or theory, is of special significance as it enables us to accept Jesus' view of his complete humanity, together with his conviction that God had filled him with his spirit to a degree so unparalleled as to make him historically a unique figure.

We are inclined to think that the main reason why men have difficulty in accepting this doctrine in its simple New Testament form is because they have not Jesus' view of God. This was based on the teaching of the first chapter of the Bible — that God created man, and created him "in his image." It was God's spirit breathed into man that

made him a living soul, and gave him the capacity of communion with his Father in Heaven. To Jesus the human and the divine are not essentially unlike, but kindred, and God is first of all one.[1] There are not three Gods, or three distinct personalities in the Godhead, which was the same prior to, during, and after the revelation of Jesus in Palestine; so views of the Trinity must be adjusted so as to be consistent with the fundamental basis of God's eternal unity. The old Jewish creed still holds good for Christianity — "The Lord our God is one Lord." The historical Jesus was not in his own mind equivalent to, or an integral and essential part of this Godhead, although it demanded the Incarnation as an expression of its outgoing love. The man of Galilee was the chosen vessel for this divine manifestation or revelation.

It is as clear as can be that Jesus prayed to God, and that he considered himself his messenger, and, to some extent, without impairing ethical or spiritual kinship, his sub-

[1] Mark 12 : 29.

ordinate. Knowing this, and realizing his human limitations as shown in the first part of this book, it does not seem possible, without restricting the idea of Deity, to call him, as he walked on earth, God, and we cannot believe that he would have himself liked to be so called.[1] Yet in him was a consciousness of complete righteousness and consecration, a realization of his headship of humanity and of his mediatorship between man and his Maker. He even accepted titles such as the "Son of God," which were supported by acts indicating that he believed himself to be God's chosen medium for the Incarnation — the revelation of Deity in and through humanity. It is this realization in one man of God's purpose for all men, rather than any difference of essence or potentiality between Jesus and his brethren, that makes him, as far as we know, the only perfect son of the one Father.

The doctrine of the Incarnation rightly understood is the best safeguard of the Christian view of Jesus of Nazareth. It

[1] Cf. Luke 18: 19.

balances the human and divine sides of his nature. It assumes that he was a man, that he lived a normal life in the flesh, that he was a completely human figure who can be placed historically. In the words of the Apostles' Creed, he was born of one known as "the Virgin Mary," "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried." These facts assert his definite historicity. He was not a vague apparition, but a concrete human personality. Yet the power he possessed was divine. It came from God. The spirit which entered his soul was the Eternal Spirit. Without the theory that God dwelt in Jesus, that he became incarnate in him, we cannot explain the perfect life the Master led or the great deeds which he did. So the human life of the man of Nazareth was raised to the divine level, of which every life is capable, by Jesus allowing himself to be completely filled of God. Christianity's historic creed is very close to the thought of its founder when it declares "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our

Lord." The doctrine of the Incarnation, therefore, is the expression of the New Testament truth that the two sides or natures of Jesus — the human and divine — discussed in earlier chapters, have revealed their latent kinship, a kinship which comes to the surface whenever a man allows the divine spirit within him to control his life. But it is not enough for the followers of Christ to copy Mohammedans and take as a battle cry "There is but one God and Jesus Christ is his prophet." Prophet he was indeed, but something infinitely greater too — revealer and revelation of the love of God. He not merely preached it and proclaimed it, but he manifested it through his own life of perfect righteousness and service.

He was the point of contact between the Logos — the active principle or expression of Deity, the outgoing Word of God — and humanity. That Jesus was conscious of the uniqueness of this divine revelation, cannot be doubted. We may find that some of his so-called "miracles" are legendary, some of the "logia" altered, some of the events

misrepresented, but no amount of scholarly criticism — and the more we get of it, of a reverent kind, the better — can efface the picture of the one man who has known himself sinless, and who was "the express image of his Father's person." In him we see man raised by his Maker to divine heights. Men are created and limited, and Jesus Christ did not consider himself an exception to this rule. God is uncreated and unlimited. Men were not created to become Gods, but through communion with the Eternal Spirit to become Godlike. God is trying to incarnate himself in every one of us, and it is to be hoped that some day we may all realize our latent divinity, as did Jesus of Nazareth, and be in a measure Christs — perfect men in love and faith. Then the words of the Apostles' Creed that Jesus is God's "*only* Son" may be no longer true, but the Master's purpose will have been advanced towards realization. For if ever that day comes, the uniqueness of Jesus Christ will stand out the more prominently, as without him it would have been impossible to reach his

level. Our relation to Christ will then be like that of Christ to God, or like that of a life of Christ to the Bible, for in each case the first named has power which may be inherent but which was nevertheless originally derivative.

Jesus did not believe that he was the Eternal God or the world's Creator. But he was conscious that his relationship to the Godhead was representative, and in its manifestation unique. He knew that his life sprang from that of the Almighty Spirit, and that his coming into the world was no accident, but part of God's eternal purpose. He was also conscious that he would serve after his death as the historical mediator between God and man, and that he would exert for all time a determining power in the act, or rather the process, of salvation —using the phrase in its broad meaning. But just what he thought of his metaphysical relationship to the Godhead, that is, his view of its essence as distinct from its manifestation, we are not told by the Master himself, and ecclesiastics should be more lenient

in judging those who prefer to leave the mystery veiled where Jesus left it. We have been considering what he thought of himself when he lived a human life in Palestine, and its significance, rather than what he may have become after he was declared to be "the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead." [1]

Of one thing the Christian feels sure — Jesus Christ carries complete conviction to his soul. He bears his own authority by his life, his character, and his message. Both heart and mind, strengthened by personal experience, say that he is God's own word to his disciples, summing up in his personality the most Godlike traits and ideals known to man. Christian theologians, therefore, have been right in thinking the Incarnation the supreme fact in history, for God did become manifest in the flesh in the man Jesus of Nazareth. This is the essential fact.

But let us remember that this manifestation is not necessarily dependent upon any theory as to his birth. The believer in the

[1] Romans 1 : 4.

Virgin Birth and the believer in the natural birth of Jesus may both place their faith in the same Incarnation. The former view, in spite of the slight historical evidence for it,[1] has prevailed in the past, and has probably helped, in uncritical ages, to emphasize the uniqueness of Christ. The second view is likely to gain strength in the future. It has one advantage: it makes the Christ-ideal seem more attainable to us as human beings, if we follow in the Master's footsteps. But whichever be the true explanation, we should always remember that the fact of the Incarnation — the entrance by God into the life of humanity in and through Jesus Christ the Messiah — is infinitely more important than the method. It is this great fact which enables us to accept his "divinity" — a term which is more in keeping with the earliest tradition than the word "deity" — and makes it possible for us to believe *in* Jesus, and not merely to believe as he believed.

[1] The only Gospel references to it are Matt. 1:18 and Luke 1:35. Paul seems to have had no knowledge of it.

We should avoid two extremes — calling the historical person Jesus of Nazareth, God; or referring to him as merely one of the world's many prophets, "Moses, Isaiah, Jesus, Paul, Luther." The wisest plan is to retain the emphasis of the double name Jesus Christ, so common in the Acts and in the Pauline Epistles — the first standing for his personal, human designation; the second, for his dignity and title as "the anointed of God." We should think of him, as he seems to have thought of himself, and as he was considered by the early disciples,[1] as a man among men who by the completeness of his consecration to God, and by the realization of a great historical ideal, which he spiritualized and broadened, became the Messiah — the one and the only one, who by the effective example of his life, death, teachings, and character has made complete divine sonship possible for all humanity. In a word Jesus believed that he was the Christ, and there is no reason why we should not accept his belief as our own.

[1] I Tim. 2:5; Romans 5:15.

We may close with the final words of the original gospel attributed to John: "these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." [1]

[1] John 20:31.

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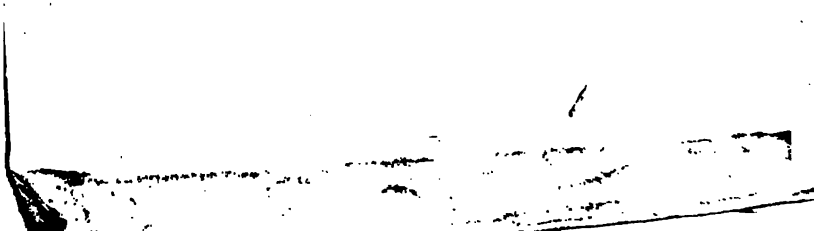

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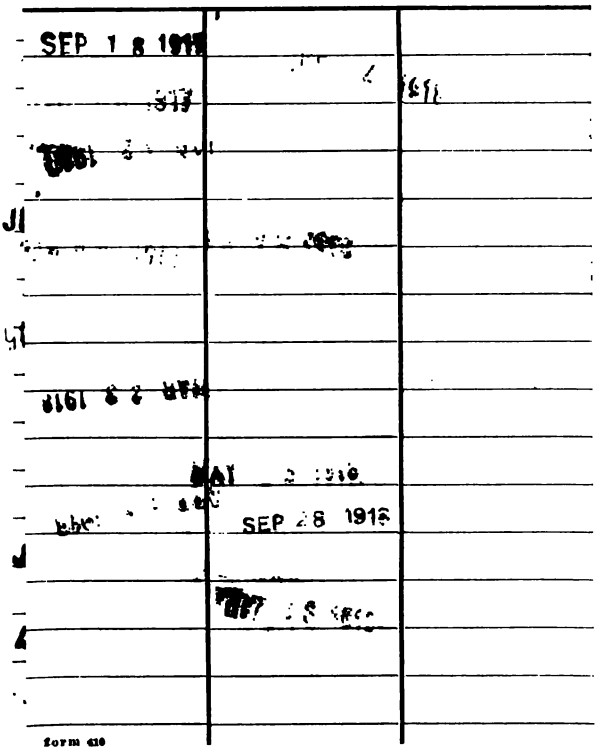
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